



BLOOD SEA

THE CRIMSON ABYSS



A SOURCEBOOK FOR V3.5 FANTASY ROLEPLAYING



BLOOD SEA

THE CRIMSON ABYSS

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Dedication

To the memory of **Joseph D. Carriker, Sr.**, a real-life adventurer and rogue, for showing me the wonders and dangers of the open sea.

Special Thanks

To Chris Pramas and the crew over at Green Ronin Publishing, for letting us use some of the rules and ideas found in *Skull & Bones*, a great resource for any pirating or seagoing campaign.



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Preface

This project has been a fantastic voyage, all on its own.

Growing up, I have fond memories of trips with my father down to the docks of Port Brownsville, Texas. Even as early as that, the sea has drawn me inexorably — it is terrifying and mesmerizing in equal measures. Its surface hides a world larger than our own, with mysteries and dangers many times more alien than even those we've imagined in outer space.

To me, the Blood Sea is in many ways the epitome of that mystery and that danger. The strangeness that can be found in its vast crimson waters outweirds those in our world, for they are twisted and made strange by the blood of a being of tremendous power — a titan. This blood makes things once perhaps sensible, if odd, unwholesome and terrible in their entirety, as even things as simple as plant life, fish and coral growths become absolute monstrosities. The dangers here are many and vicious.

So, come explore the blood-drenched waters. See the changes that the viscera of Kadum have had upon those same seas from which he dredged the lands of Scarn eons ago.

Welcome to the Blood Sea. Whatever you do, don't drink the water.

Joseph D. Carriker, Jr.
Scarred Lands Developer
Sword & Sorcery Studios



A Note on References

The reader will find abbreviations in this book that refer to other titles that offer helpful reference. Each is listed as follows:

- CCrev** **Creature Collection Revised**
- CC2** **Creature Collection II:
Dark Menagerie**
- CC3** **Creature Collection III:
Savage Bestiary**
- RR** **Relics & Rituals**
- RR2** **Relics & Rituals II: Lost Lore**
- MM** **Core Rulebook III**

The Blood Sea

Chapter One: The Scarlet Deeps

Lore of the Blood Sea

My dear Maresindra, I trust you and your brethren in Rahoch are well? I hope I cause no offense, but I suggest that in all future correspondence, we acknowledge the glory and just rule of King Virduk. Never know what overzealous eyes may be reading these words.

In any case, my colleagues here are supportive of your work. It is obvious that, as a cleric of Manawe, the problem of the Blood Sea is close to you. Even here in Lokil, the danger and horror of that corrupted place touch us. I regret, however, that I have been unable to rouse any substantive personnel to assist you in your crusade. My fellows do wish to vanquish the monsters and power of the sanguinary ocean — but they are scholars, not warriors.

As for your second request, that is a much simpler matter — at least on the surface. Indeed, I would be hard-pressed to stop the torrent of comments and references the subject of the Blood Sea elicits. I have gathered and copied materials on the subject. As we discussed, you are bound to keep this information in strictest confidence — limited to yourself and the more ... restrained of your faith. I rely on your discretion.

I realize the utility of many of these documents may not be obvious at first glance. The true secret of knowledge — if you will bear a pontifical aside — is that it is fertile. The loose fact of the habits of this place or the experiences of that may connect to a matter lying before you. Knowledge is expansive — one fact added to one fact may yield multitudes.

I will continue my researches here. There are some records I have not been able to access as of yet, and we are due for a shipment of some interesting tablets from the waters off of Mithril.

— Letter from Telbot the UMBER, Sage of Lokil

Before the Sea was Blood

*From the rift came word
Oracles prophesying war
Commanders counseling caution
Dreamers waking in terror.
All is our servant
Bowing down to our might
From the majestic kraken
To surface folk.
No threat is beyond us.*

— Fragment of poem found on a metal sheet recovered from deep waters off of Mithril, tentatively dated pre-Old Calendar. It bears a familial resemblance to the elvish script Ahna.

Research into the Blood Sea begins well before the chaining of Kadum. Earliest records hint at a large civilization of undersea elves extending throughout the ocean east of Ghelspad. A number of structural details, such as the Fifteen Steps submerged close to the Cliffs of Constancy, evince common origin. Divination consistently places these artifacts all well before the Old Calendar. Of course, accuracy is, as ever, hampered by the chaotic influence of the Divine War.

Theories are split on the nature of this civilization. Many of my colleagues believe this to be an empire of the merfolk. The similarity of weapon design, architecture and language to those of high elves is explained as a borrowing — evidence of trade rather than identity.

This is slack-minded willful ignorance of the evidence.

At the heights of the Ledean empire, a committed band of wizards could construct a castle in the sky, completely sealed in stone, and survive quite comfortably. It is not difficult to imagine that elves — seeking perhaps to flee competition with other titanspawn and the influence of titans in the open land — might use a modest amount of magic to live productively beneath the waves.

Testimony of an Elf

*this one spake to the ancient elf,
seeking an answer for the empty
waters. many had noted the dearth
of fish and life from the eastern
sea, a lack that fortuitously re-
treated from year to year. in a
mere generation, the number of fish-
ing vessels returning with heavy
nets has doubled. the shore is cov-
ered with seabirds, much like those
seen in western lands.*

the elf spake, telling of the hungry one who long before spent much time on the waters. sunning himself majestically, an ocean of flesh glistening upon the horizon. for weeks did he do this. and then, in a moment, a massive deluge. many died on shore, but the elf saw, he, a youth, saw the shape dive down, maw open.

It was then that the fish died, and the porpoises, and the sea-turtles, and empires 'neath the waves.

the elf would not speak more on this last, but merely looked to the watery east with the weight of years.

— Annotated Histories of the Primordium, Anerivus of Periel (near present-day Lave), c. 100 OC.

If they give it any thought, most unlearned peoples of Ghelspad would likely attribute the pisceans to some generative result of the Blood Sea. The two are considered of a kind, and that is sufficient for most. But this is not true — the pisceans long predate the Divine War and the resultant pollution.

“Lore of the Great Trade” dates from the late Triumn Dynasty, a long recounting of matters affecting elvish merchant shipping between Ghelspad and Termana. It notes the increasing difficulty with avoiding piscean patrols. By the end of the record, all elvish trading vessels are recommended to allocate funds toward paying piscean tribute rather than contest their dominance.

Tales exist that the previous aquatic empire — whatever its nature — also demanded tribute. Students frequently pounce on this, excited to draw a connection between modern pisceans and the pre-Ledean enigma.

Any serious examination of the provenance of pre-Ledean and piscean items shows no substantial resemblance. What similarities exist are easily attributable to the demands of undersea life.

Of the Sea's People

After two hours, we had achieved a stalemate — one that could not last. Our sea witches were consumed with the task of protecting our ship from the pisceans. The waters boiled green with their bodies, glint of eyes watching as they waited out our spells, matching the vessel's speed easily.

Then, blessings unto Manawe, they came. The first sign was a trumpeting in the distance, beyond a swell. The pisceans were slow to react, a few looking this way or that, then like a great surge the merfolk came to our aid.

Many of the merfolk died in the attack, though not as many as we. When the last piscean had fled, we invited our saviors aboard. They politely declined.

I asked for what reason they had come to our aid. The lithesome figures turned to one another, amused smiles exchanged. It was not us they had come to save — the pisceans had drifted into their territory.

Good fortune is still a blessing, and we thanked them with gems and fine metal chains. A paltry sum for our lives — and much less than the pisceans had demanded.

— Log of Arnim Bluestar, captain of the *Canted Runner*, 1255 OC

The Staining of the Sea

Sir, it strains the mind and imagination. After an endless time of terrible marvels and chaos remaking the land, even those with senses grown dull from abuse can still rear up in indignant shock.

The second and fourth fleets are gone — possibly more besides. A massive wave took most, scouring the land in a churning mass of uprooted trees and rock. I was on a watchtower inland. Though it shook and eventually collapsed, I was spared the grinding death of my comrades.

But through the spyglass such a sight. A gleam, in the distance, far out to sea. Something metal and moving, vast shapes cutting through the water and turning leagues of it to frothing. The first wave came. And then the second, third ... swell after swell as the horizon mysteriously darkened.

I understood but slowly, as I watched the tide grow scarlet. It was perhaps three days, as we gathered survivors. The beaches began to run red, then darkened with dried ichor. Like seaweed long, stringy black clots dotted with the pale bodies of fish.

I send this to you now, as even darker rumors test the limits of our sanity. The sea has not died. Mercy has fled.

— Fragment of letter recovered from ruins along the southern shore of the Cordrada Corridor

Last Words of a Dying People

It is the fourteenth hour of the Mistreaper, when parents kiss their children and calm them, tell happy lies about the life ahead of them.

Already I can feel the stirring within me. I am deep within the earth — one of the stone roots of our keep, surrounded by mud and stirring sediment. Ancient spells once kept the water here fresh, far from the open spaces and currents of the main building.

I suppose, now, that I shall never discover what these roots were used for. One might almost imagine them watchtowers, set upended into the ocean floor. Watching for what, I wonder. Strange earth-beasts living below? The space is bare stone set with strange recesses — possibly stylized apertures. No magic here that I have been able to bring into view — beyond the water freshening.

Here I pen my last words.

My spells hold back the corruption, but imperfectly. A titan's strength draws from the motes and currents of the world itself — not a thing that can be idly swept aside by ephemer-

era like myself. It stirs, a taste of rot and flesh and rage drifting invisibly into this chamber.

I write without light, seeking to avoid their notice. My fellows — my mates, my children, my family. I remember my last wife, her elegant green fins stained violet at the tips, eyes that of a shark. She held the remains of our baby, laughing and waving it through the air, forming patterns of horror as the blood slowly billowed out.

In righteous anger — an anger as foreign to me as dancing on the moon — I slew her. I despised her anger, sought to destroy it. The contradiction dawned on me but slowly, afterward. As the waters above darkened further, the madness grew.

I do not know how many others realized what was happening. But I fled, driven by the madness.

No, the dead stare at me. They must have honesty. I fled, but from no influence. In the deep forgotten works of the old city, I cast my spells to protect and discover. The blood was everywhere, speaking of anger and hatred, and of the ancient depths.

I expect Kadum lies bleeding somewhere. Only he could change us into the monstrosities I saw, could bring the rage that spoke of the oldest seas. It is likely he will rise again soon and the corruption will disperse — but it will be too late for us.

I will flee the only way I can. I will escape corruption, and perhaps someone will read this. I do not deserve a name. My strengths give up their lie — I have saved no one, protected nothing. Mate-killer, call me, if I must have a name. I go.

— Writing on a metal sheet found next to a merfolk skeleton northeast of Mullis Town

Last Thoughts

I have spent the past twenty years here in Moor, far from the sea. Most call me the Captain and tell stories of what treasures I must hold. I have taken some comfort in their tales — adventures in which I am surely some dashing gentleman-pirate, gathering booty and rescuing damsels. I do not talk about my days at sea, and so some believe me to put on airs, to intimate history as a cover for some darker past.

I was no hero. I was no villain.

I was there when the storms came, when — as we learned much later — Kadum was chained beneath the sea. We sailed from the port city of Trepolis in Durrover. I believe we were the last to see that place before Corean's blade severed the land.

We sailed for a month toward Hedrad, transporting arms. It was thought that one of the titanspawn hordes would attack from the north there.

Then the storms. We had no choice but to sail on, surviving the days of blood-limned wind.

We thought, then, the danger had passed. The reddening waters were a concern, of course. But we had no idea — and no real choice but to forge onward.

Many fish floated on the surface. We set our lines deep, not willing to risk whatever decay had begun in what floated around us. What we brought up was worse than any decay.

I remember the thing clearly. A long mullet, skin a vibrant scarlet. Not terribly unlike a mullet — at least to my initial glance. It writhed in my hand, then, spines burrowing into my skin somehow. Jaws more akin to a shark's took off my thumb. Both thumb and fish tumbled to the deck. The creature hissed, moving across the deck before a crewman dispatched it with a cutlass.

Without fish, our food stores were inadequate. That is all I will say on that matter.

But we made it to Hedrad — haggard and few in number. The trip had taken twice as long, what with the storms and powerful currents. We made it, and the Hedradans gave us a meager price for what weapons we had. I took what I had, spent it going as far west as I could.

So I have lived in Moor, far from the ocean. It used to call to me, a stirring from the oldest tales. It still calls — in the quiet, deadly hours of the night.

I do have treasure. Despite raging titans and terrible gods, I have two surviving children, and a score of grandchildren. And I will die, soon, at peace.

— Last memoirs of Capt. Olger Miundson, c. 20 AV

Daily Life of Blood Sea

A LIVING ANIMAL IS COMPOSED PRIMARILY OF WATER — ROUGHLY SIX PARTS OF TEN. EACH TISSUE REQUIRES MOISTURE TO FUNCTION. WHILE A MAN MAY LIVE FOR LONG PERIODS WITHOUT FOOD, ONLY A FEW DAYS OF THIRST WILL SLAY.

BUT BLOOD? BLOOD IS THE FOUNDATION, THE ESSENCE OF LIFE. IT HEARKENS TO THE WATERS FROM WHICH ALL LIFE IS SAID TO HAVE COME. KADUM'S MIGHTY HANDS DIGGING THE MOUND OF EARTH, HIS SEED QUICKENING THE SOIL AND WATERS, BRINGING MULTITUDES.

A MAN MAY LIVE ON BLOOD. I HAVE KEPT SEVERAL ALIVE ON BLOOD FOR WEEKS AT A TIME, THOUGH ONE MUST BEWARE OF CHOKING. THE VOMITING CEASES QUICKLY ENOUGH, HOWEVER.

AS VITAL AS HUMAN BLOOD IS, THAT OF THE CREATORS IS INESTIMABLY GREATER STILL. IT IS NATURAL. AS A SCHOLAR IS

greater in every respect than a commoner, so, too, the titans. A child is but the property and lesser derivation of the parent, fit for experimentation or work as needed. A child is the back upon which the immortality of the parent rests, a mere vessel for continuance.

So, too, the titans and the gods.

Rumors name me a worshipper. I guard my words well, but they are fools. One does not worship, one acknowledges. If a wizard is ready with fiery death, does one's heart fill with gladness and faith? No. Respect and caution are due, no more.

Likewise, I bend a knee to the gods whose followers may strike me down. I respect the titans, whose essential *materias* can unmake the very atoms of my being.

I give advice — how the blood-infested may be recognized, how to distill water that is almost safe to drink. Stories and strategies pass up and down the shores of the Blood Sea — a valuable resource. As an avowed “expert” in these matters there is some suspicion — but my good works speak for me.

And so I purify the blood essence, and feed my subjects. The changes are remarkable. The blood has the power of creation scintillating within. Why, it is a simple matter to transplant a head onto a body, fashioning a mock ettin. And then, an application of blood to turn the headless revenant into some sanguinary horror.

True, many bodies are lost, but in these trying times, one cannot track every orphan and foreigner. I must be careful, however. Some have come close to discovering my laboratory on a few occasions.

— Part of documents uncovered by Mithril Knights after raid on quarters of one Darvine of Lave, 135 AV. Whereabouts of Darvine and his laboratory currently unknown.

A Merchant's Ambition

Eight days out of Delis, we have successfully navigated through much of the archipelago. At least two islands seem to have moved, much to the concern of our sea witch.

The sea already is growing strange; it seems an ugly violet bruise, like a horizon threatening storm. Surges and swirls of scarlet mark currents. While helpful, quiet terror is hard to still in the crew. They eye everything with suspicion, from seabirds to the hull of the ship.

The crew is more diligent, if dangerously somber. Punishments are at a rare low. I look forward to our next landfall at the tip of Corean's Cleft.

Then another five months to Hedrad, hugging the coast as much as possible. In the deep ocean swim islands of flesh, swiftly swimming blades, and other terrors.

We should be safe, as long as I can keep the crew calm. Our wizards can handle some bad weather and a few monsters. They had better, considering what I'm paying them.

Just a few trips. A few damn trips. And I can prove this is a viable route — then stay comfortably at home in Rahoch.

— Diary of Kaera Ardos, primary investor of merchant vessel *Guarded Reserve*, c. 86 AV

Wise Advice

there are three places you can ensure proper safety: in the water, in the boat, on the shore.

when fishing, learn to identify dangerous concentrations of taint. remember that bloodied water can run deep, while the water on the surface is clear. if the upper water is moving swiftly or there is tainted water nearby, be wary. even if the area is clear, fish may be arriving from other, tainted waters. finally, keep your ears open. find out where others

have had trouble. talk about what you've seen. don't be a hoarder: there are plenty of untainted fish for all!

next, inspect what you reel up. spend some time examining the first few fish. are they an unusual color? do they have a proper number of eyes? a fish that looks unhealthy may not be tainted, but it surely is not good to eat in any case. those doctoring fish (such as cutting off unusual appendages) will be harshly punished. remember: if you hide tainted, what of the food you eat?

on the shore a rougher division can be made. have a series of baskets to sort your catch. fish that look more worrisome can be placed apart. some deviations can infect and spread, destroying entire catches. do not panic if the fish look unusual. inexperienced crew may miss some of the natural variations between types of fish, and new types occasionally migrate into our area.

again, do not panic. if you are attacked by your catch, contact the nearest post immediately.

the following diagrams show the proper anatomy of fish in the vicinity of mithril. illustrations of other types of sea creatures are available at modest cost. remember: the health and safety of everyone depend on you.

—From the Mithril Monitor Missive on Safety: Fish

Sailor's Tales

It is true. I saws it with me own eyes — five days out of Hedrad, I saws it. Skipping 'long the coast, we were, down from Mithril. Putrid Blood Sea jellyfish nabbed some of our men. All quick-like, gone in a jiff with two of 'em afore the wizard on the crew could get to the rail.

Not even a scream, den. Just — blurp. And two less men.

I think it was them there pisceans, it were. They have powers, you know? Powers over the corrupt and tainted.



What? No, no, it were after that, it were. So we were on the alert, you unnerstand. Alert and on our toes.

Was a late afternoon, sun meeting its copper mate. Got hazy — a ruddy mess fooshing out of them there water. Fog, it was. The wizard, he looked at it with a frown, but had nothing to do. We watched each other. Never know ... there are stories of crews going mad wit' the taint. And in a mist o' taint? No good from that.

Well, then we saw it. A ship. We manned the ballista — we had two, bloody lotta good them ever did. This time no different. Sailed through ... nothing but an illusion, said the wizard. He prepared for pisceans.

But then we saw them on the ship. A crew, red shadows. They were saluting. Just standing as we sailed broadside. Couldn't make out their'n faces in the red, but there they were.

Oh yes, I know of the stories. There be them thar ships what pull up. Bloated undead swarm o'er, and the ships fall apart. We thought of that, readied for boarding. But we somehow knew they wouldn't. And they didn't.

No, nothing happened. I don't know. Mayhap they were ghosts of a ship, ghosts of one of them blood-taint ships. Yeah, they were ruddy like the rest. I'm no cleric, I don't know who or what. But they were crew, brothers of the sea.

I don't want to talk no more.

— Recorded at Holy Waters Pub, Unseen District of Hedrad, c. 130 AV

Judgment of a Charlatan

It is the opinion of this magistrate that Rugen Wolchik is guilty of more than simple fraud. He has on numerous occasions shown a lack of respect for the necessary defense of our fair town.

During last spring's infestation of monstrous crabs, he was nowhere to be seen. True, charity is no requirement. But when supplies of polearms were needed, he stepped to the fore — to charge usurious rates.

When we needed to then clean the shore, wash away the taint with holy power, did he lend his servant Teoren of Hedrada? No, not even an excuse afterward.

Before that, there was the horrific arrival of a ship of blood zombies. They destroyed docks and moved toward the town center before a timely arrival of paladins from Mithril. Only when his own home was threatened did he make any move to help. He was quite insistent on our aid then, and we gave it gladly, with no expectation of return.

All of us are under threat, Rugen Wolchik. All of us live or die together. This shuffling of money and responsibility may be fine inland, in the large cities. But here, one casual mistake can kill large numbers of people — yourself included.

This is the final indignity. Selling charms to repel tainted beasts — charms with not a trace of actual power. You state that they are merely meant for inspiration and as an icon of determination over titanspawn. Fine words, sir, but we have had enough.

I do not think you understand the gravity of the situation — that smirk is unbecoming. Frankly, I'm surprised you were stupid enough to sell as many as you did before attempting to flee.

I have had enough of this man. I sentence him to death, to be carried out immediately. His body is to be burnt.

I would cast him out into the offal he has unwittingly assisted, but I fear I would see him again in slightly more loathsome form.

— Court records of Quartzburg, small town 20 miles south of Mithril, 144 AV

Life on Bloody Shores

Remarkable indeed is the adaptation along the eastern coast of Ghelspad. Much as in the cases of Vesh and New Venir, the communities from the Hornswythe River up to the City of Mithril contend with horrors born of the dying titans.

It is a verity that the human psyche can bear unbelievable horrors eventually with little more than a firm frown — or even a smile.

It is also easy for those further west to imagine a constant barrage of evil — swarms of razorfin dolphins clustering around the docks, blood zombies flooding into the ports, and terrifying storms rolling across the land with unknown horrors winging their way west.

Life is not so terrible — at least not constantly. Many encounters with the terror born of the Blood Sea are relatively mild. A misshapen fish, a foreboding cloud, perhaps a strange fin cutting through the waters. These fill the days and weeks.

But true threats are rare. The people of the coasts are hardy, survivors of the vast war and constant threat. Like all of us, they have rebuilt and grown in the face of an angry world.

Hedrad faces perhaps the worst of the waters. It is buffeted frequently by blood monsoons and has witnessed formidable attacks by pisceans and foamers. The city is remarkably well defended, however, and strengthened by discipline. Most of Hedrad's food comes from the untainted lands to the north, but some brave the waters near the mouth of the Hornswythe River.

Mithril is not as defensible, but the sea is less tainted than that near Hedrad. The Toe Islands shield the coast from storms and from the worst of the blood taint. Mithril shares the order and law of Hedrad, husbanding its strength and security carefully. Fishing is safer, both due to the cleaner water and scrupulous civil oversight.

The few villages along the Cordrada coast survive primarily through association with the paladins of Mithril and numerous Vigilant patrols. They emulate many of the screening procedures of Mithril though are somewhat less successful. Periodically populations scatter due to attack or corruption, but still people come back to try to eke out a life here.

Finally, the region around the Hornswythe River faces numerous surges from the Blood Sea. Blood monsoons and influx of blood taint are only slightly more a threat here than the random depredations of titanspawn and other monsters throughout the Scarred Lands.

— Introduction to Chapter 2, *Chronicles of the Divine Age*, vol. VI, Tomás Vediri c. 130 AV

Adventuring on the Blood Sea

With the madness behind us, we took to heart the warnings of the fishermen. Vigilance in keeping the hull clean, an eye on the horizon; I just hoped the loss of our sea witch would not doom us.

I admit here, with mere pages as my witness, that I underestimated matters. In fair Mithril, the sea was a foe, sitting implacable in the distance with ever-changing face. But it was at an arm's length. Defending against the slow insinuation was one matter.

Here — here my armor avails me not. Dark depths are below, infinite scarlet vistas hiding such horrors — and I am only a pebble upon them. There are no certainties, no walls, no solid truth to steady oneself against. Just tumbling open infinities.

Corean, forgive my presumption.

— Scrap of parchment recovered from a wreck off of Hedrad

Most efforts in the Blood Sea require a vessel and some knowledge of sailing. Testing the weather, avoiding natural hazards — from marine life to blood barnacles — and other attempts normally relegated to Survival must instead rely on Profession (sailor). A character with 5 or more ranks in Survival does gain a +2 synergy bonus for Profession (sailor) checks here.

Most ship crews carry their own provisions. While fishing vessels can gather food from the sea, trading and war vessels are not suited for the task. In addition, the crews of trading vessels must spend their days keeping the vessel running and in good shape, not hauling nets. Still, crews typically supplement their unappetizing supplies with simple line fishing.

Fish are not the only food to be found in the sea. Sea mammals, birds, squid, sharks, jellyfish and seaweed can all provide sustenance.

Blood Sea Hunting and Foraging	
d%	Result
01–40	Edible seaweeds
41–70	Small fish
71–80	Large fish
81–86	Squid
87–93	Sea mammal
94–97	Sea reptile
98–00	Jellyfish

It is vital in the Blood Sea to identify tainted food. A meal of fish and seaweed has a chance of significant or concentrated taint. The flesh of creatures such as black pisceans, Blood Sea mutants and blood-tainted creatures may cause blood ingestion effects if eaten in large quantities, such as a full meal. Extensive contact, on the other hand, will cause blood fever instead.

Identifying such corrupted food is often easy. A fish with tentacles is clearly unnatural, as is slowly moving red

Blood Barnacles

Blood barnacles (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**) are a hazard throughout the Blood Sea. Sailors check each day for fishing vessels or other stationary ships, and each week for quick-moving trading vessels. Any one of the ship's crew may make the check, a Profession (sailor) roll (DC 12 at edge of Blood Sea, DC 15 in peripheral waters, DC 20 in deep Blood Sea). Additional crew members may aid another to increase the sailor's check.

On a failed check, evidence of blood barnacles is overlooked. They start massing on the hull and begin invoking rage within 1d4 days after the failed check. A DC 15 Spot check on each subsequent day will reveal the threatening blood barnacles (characters with 5 or more ranks in Profession (sailor) gain a +2 synergy bonus to this check).

Removing blood barnacles without destroying the hull takes 1d4 days of regular labor, on land. At sea matters are considerably more difficult. If the ship must stay out at sea, daily efforts to scrub off the barnacles require an additional check for blood barnacles and ship speed is halved. A successful check destroys the blood barnacles.

Mithril tar protects against blood barnacles, though at some cost. (The name of the substance comes from where it was developed, not its composition.) An application costs 10 gp for each 10 feet of ship length and provides a +1 for checks to resist blood barnacles. Up to 10 layers of this tar may be applied, providing a maximum +10 bonus. The layers (and their corresponding bonuses) wear away at a rate of one per month.

kelp. In some cases identification may be more difficult. In cases where food has a severe taint, it has a 75% chance of being obvious without any significant effort. In cases of less contaminated food, such as that causing blood fever, it is obvious in 25% of cases. Otherwise a DC 10 Craft (alchemy) check, DC 12 Knowledge (nature) check, DC 15 Profession (sailor) check or DC 20 Spot check is required to identify the creature properly.

Table 1–1 covers the potential effects that contaminated food can have upon those who consume it. Specifics on blood fever and blood ingestion are described below.

Table 1–1: Food Contamination

Edge of Blood Sea	Outer Blood Sea	Central Blood Sea	Depths	Result
d%	d%	d%	d%	
01–94	01–91	01–84	01–69	Uncontaminated
95–99	92–99	85–98	70–95	Blood fever
00	00	99–00	96–00	Blood ingestion

- **Blood Fever:** Consumption of food contaminated by Kadum's blood or exposure to concentrations of that blood requires a DC 20 Fortitude saving throw or else suffering the effects of the enhanced disease blood fever. The incubation period is 6d4 hours. When the incubation is complete, the victim takes 1d3 points of temporary Constitution damage and begins to tremble or convulse and to sweat blood. The victim must make a DC 18 Will save or experience a change in alignment to chaotic evil for the disease's duration. After this change in alignment, an additional DC 16 Will save must be made each day. If the roll fails, the victim is seized by a homicidal rage and will attack anyone around him. This maddened state persists for the duration of the illness.

Once per day thereafter, the victim must make a successful Fortitude saving throw to avoid repeated damage. Three successful saving throws in a row indicate that the victim has thrown off the disease and recovered, taking no more damage and returning to his original alignment. Any induced rage also ceases once the victim has recovered.

Anyone coming into physical contact with the victim risks catching the disease, though resisting contraction of blood fever in this manner is a DC 12 Fortitude save.

Over time, repeated bouts of blood fever can lead to horrific changes. Consumption of blood-tainted foods while in the throes of blood fever requires a DC 15 Fortitude saving throw per day to avoid becoming tainted permanently. If the character fails, another DC 15 Fortitude saving throw is made. On a failure the character becomes a grotesque (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**); on a success the character becomes blood-tainted (see the template in the Appendix of this book).

- **Blood Ingestion:** Seriously contaminated or concentrated Kadum's blood can cause more severe effects. First, the blood acts as an ingested DC 18 poison, with initial damage of 2d6 Con and secondary damage of 1d6 Con. Those who survive the initial symptoms must then make a DC 16 Fortitude saving throw or be transformed into Blood Sea mutants (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**). Blood Sea mutations can be

cured with a *remove disease*, *heal* or *remove curse* spell. Kadum's blood and the concentration of taint in food may be considered both poison and disease for spell purposes.

Weather

The coasts are home to some of the most severe weather in all of the Scarred Lands. Moisture and heat fuel storms, and the sea has plenty of both. These systems drive powerfully into the continent and eventually lose strength, but not before rolling over the coastline. In addition, these storms drive powerful surges and waves that batter the shore.

The Blood Sea is warm, warmer than other seas, thanks to the steaming blood of a titan that bubbles up from the depths. This drives harsher weather than is normal for the clime and can cause even more severe problems. Strong winds can bear titan blood far inland, and a hurricane can bring

an orgy of destructive frenzy to regions normally free from the taint.

In the middle ocean comes some safety in being far from crushing coastline. Still, the deep water means waves can become much greater, tumbling ships and sending them to the bottom with ease.

Weather on the Blood Sea can be determined through the use of Table 1–2.

Squalls

Storms on the ocean can range from a blessing (if the crew needs fresh water) to a curse (if a hurricane threatens to capsize the vessel). Among the more troublesome of weather conditions on the high seas are squalls.

If a squall is sighted, a ship can try to outrun it, buying enough time for it to die naturally, but a regular vessel's speed is halved due to choppy speeds and violently shifting winds. Given the challenge, most ship captains try to move out of its

Table 1–2: Blood Sea Weather

d%	d%	Spring	Summer	Winter/Fall
01–12	01	Clear	Clear	Clear
13–25	02	Clear	Clear	Clear
26–34	03	Fog	Clear	Fog
35–45	04	Rain	Fog	Rain
46–60	05	Thunderstorm	Rain	Thunderstorm
61–75	06–12	Bloodwinds	Downpour	Downpour
76–85	13–31	Downpour	Thunderstorm	Windstorm
86–93	32–59	Windstorm	Thunderstorm	Squalls
94–98	60–86	Squalls	Windstorm	Hurricane
99–00	87–00	Hurricane	Squalls	Hurricane

To determine weather each day, roll d% and compare the result against the first column.

To determine weather that pretty much holds for the week, roll d% and compare the result against the second column. Note that this can result in a greater likelihood of severe conditions (not an uncommon occurrence on the Blood Sea).

For weather in the inner Blood Sea, move the result one category higher.

Fog, Rain, Storm, Windstorm: See Chapter 3 of the DMG for details of these weather conditions.

Squalls: Squalls are dangerous weather patterns that occur both along the coasts and in the deep sea. They are small storms with hurricane-level winds that can cause severe damage. This weather result brings a 10% chance per hour of a squall manifesting in the course of the day, 20% if traveling quickly. A squall lasts 1d4 hours, though a storm system may dissipate and reform into squalls repeatedly. A nearby squall has a 50% chance of intercepting a ship, resulting in an encounter.

Bloodwinds: This weather condition involves a surge of concentrated blood. The chance of food being tainted is tripled during bloodwinds. See blood monsoons, below, if this result is rolled for weather in spring.

Blood Monsoons: These are much like bloodwinds, but the influence travels many miles inland. They are not listed on the table, since they only occur in the spring. Each spring brings a 10% chance of a blood monsoon, which lasts 1d20 days. Each day of monsoon brings corruption further inland. The “edge of Blood Sea” result extends to areas 10 miles inland x number of days of monsoon, “outer Blood Sea” extends 5 miles x number of days of monsoon, and “central Blood Sea” covers 1 mile x number of days of monsoon. This distance is x5 up the Hornswythe River, and x1/4 for the regions within the Celestial Shelf.

path instead. The navigator must make a DC 20 Profession (sailor) check. Add 5 to the roll for each mile per hour the ship is capable of. Failure indicates the ship is caught in the storm. A squall is surrounded by progressively weaker winds, stepping down one category per mile.

If a squall dies down, it becomes a windstorm or thunderstorm and continues in the same general path at a rate of 1d10 miles per hour. (Along eastern Ghelspad, squalls normally head in a westerly or northwesterly direction.) This storm has a 15% chance per hour of becoming a squall again.

Detecting a squall is handled as a Spot check. Rather than rolling against a specific DC, the check result determines the storm's distance from the ship when it is spotted — simply halve the check result to determine the storm's distance in miles. If the check result is 2 or less, the squall surges out of nowhere to buffet the ship. (A spotter with 5 or more ranks of Profession (sailor) or Knowledge (nature) gains a +2 synergy bonus to the check.)

If a squall is not spotted until it overtakes the ship, the captain must make a DC 20 Profession

(sailor) check to rouse his crew properly. On a failed check, any action taken during the course of the storm is at +10 DC and the ship is considered unprepared for ship damage purposes (see Table 1–3).

The ship is subjected to hurricane-force winds while the squall passes through. A squall is unpredictable, as its strength can wax or wane without warning. A large, quick-moving squall could pass quickly overhead, while a small, slow storm might sit and build around a ship.

Control weather is the most effective means for destroying a squall. The same magic could also create a squall, should the caster wish to place one in a ship's path. Brine hags enjoy conjuring up storms to dispatch victims or drive ships onto islands to be marooned. *Control winds* has similar effects but requires rather close proximity.

Winds and Ship Speeds

Note that sailing speeds are an average. Often winds are not in an optimal direction, requiring ships to tack into the wind. In specific cases a ship may move from half to twice normal speed, though

Table 1–3: Ships and Damage

Storms: Use the following table to determine the potential damage that may result from a squall, a hurricane or other severe weather.

		Storm Damage
Prepared d%	Unprepared d%	Result
01–75	01–50	Shaken but otherwise fine
76–85	51–70	Battered, 5% of cargo or items that can break or be water damaged are spoiled
86–90	71–80	Minor damage, 10% of cargo damaged, speed is 1/2 until repaired
91–93	81–85	Significant damage, 20% of cargo damaged, ship requires 1d4 days of repair until capable of movement
94–95	86–90	Severe damage, 50% of cargo damaged, ship requires 1d4 days of repair and then moves at 1/2 speed
96–97	91–94	Adrift, 50% of cargo damaged, ship is adrift without the aid of magic
98–99	95–98	Sinking, 50% of cargo damaged, ship will sink in 1d6 hours without the aid of magic
00	99–00	Wreck, 75% of cargo damaged or lost, ship will sink within 2d10 minutes

Winds: In strong winds, roll against the Storm Damage table, above. A ship is considered prepared if it is batted down and not moving, and unprepared in any other case.

For a ship sailing in severe winds and worse, use the Wind Damage table, below. The roll indicated in the last column is applied to the unprepared column in the Storm Damage table, above. Make one roll per 6 hours of travel until wind conditions subside.

Wind Damage		
Winds	Ship Speed	Roll
Severe	3/4	1d8 x10
Windstorm	1/2	1d8 x10 +10
Hurricane	1/4	d%
Tornado	0	1d10 +90

Polar Ice Cap

The Blood Sea

Ghelspad

Trade Routes

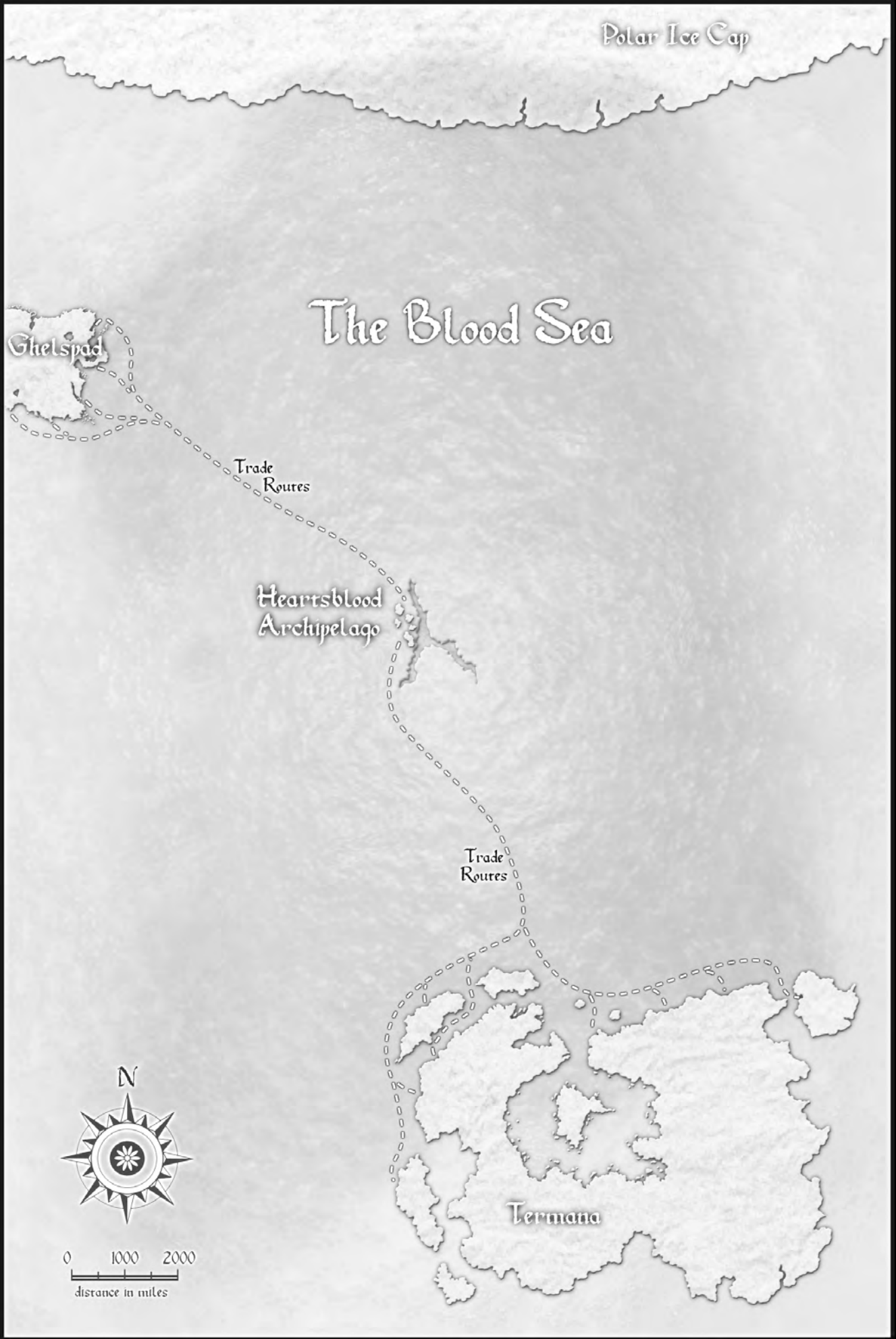
Heartsblood Archipelago

Trade Routes

Termana



0 1000 2000
distance in miles



it can seldom keep this up for long. Certain routes and seasons have more favorable effective speeds. *Control weather* can produce favorable winds, if the ship has the services of a spellcaster at its disposal.

Coastal Blood Sea

The coastal shallows of the Blood Sea embody a tension between risk and necessity. Deep currents come to the surface in the shallows, warmed and supporting teeming masses of life. But Kadum's blood is near, as are the creatures his blood has spawned. The bounty of the oceans is a blessing to the divine races, as is the easy passage between cities along the coasts. The same bounty draws monsters, and the long trade lanes are prey to sudden squalls and hurricanes.

The character of shallows is determined by both the natural layout of the area and the concentration of blood. Fresh water flowing out of rivers can create regions of fertile, safe sea. Bays and inlets can shield from the concentration of blood. Upsurges, common along coasts, bring cold, fertile waters from the ocean depths. The flow of this deep water may extend from the clean waters to the south. Some of these deep currents cut through the center of the Blood Sea and bring thick concentrations of blood far to the north.

In the northern waters of Termana, the Blood Sea is divided into the main ocean and Kadum's Bight. The inner waters of Kadum's Bight are relatively light in taint. Storm surges and seasonal shifts in current can bring thicker concentrations into the bight. More significant are migrations of fish, seabirds and sea mammals in and out of this region. Most travel significant distances into the Blood Sea and become corrupted there.

In the northern stretch is a large number of tainted sea life. Much of this sea was above ground as little as a century ago, so the seafloor is rather unusual. Erosion and shifts of the ocean floor can cause sudden blooms of algae, bringing increased populations of fish and other animals. Undertows and surges are also common from settling earth and underwater landslides.

Plants

Seaweeds of many varieties drift through the coastal ocean, many on air-filled bladders. In the colder north, drifting masses of seaweed can form temporary islands, small patches where seagulls and crabs can land. Fish use the undersides of these islands as shelter, particularly for young.

Further south large kelp forests fill the waters. Explorers of the submerged ruins of Termana often must contend with these forests, which fill much of the warm shallows.

Animals

Birds, crustaceans, sea mammals, fish, squid and octopi fill the waters of the Blood Sea in dizzying variety. While the corrupting nature of Kadum's blood drives many to destruction, the sea is vast and resources plentiful.

Along the coasts are shallow areas, sand bars, where the water becomes quite warm. Deep ocean water surges up along these bars, bringing nutrients. Between the nutrients, warmth and light, the waters become rich food for fish. Then, in turn, the teeming populations of fish attract large predators. Squid, dolphin, seals and gulls are just a few that gather to take part in the feast. Along the shore crocodiles hunt, capable of taking on almost any prey.

Finally, coral reefs can be found in the warm waters off the western coast of Termana. These provide homes for multitudes of organisms, seeking shelter and food within their crenellated surface. Many of these reefs were severely damaged in the divine war but are slowly recovering. While newly submerged regions may provide a good environment for reefs in the future, it takes a long time for reefs to grow.

Monsters

A wide variety of strange creatures share the marine environment. Some are direct mutations of Kadum's blood, such as razorfin dolphins. Others have murkier origins, bizarre creations of ancient titan whim.

While the fey are often associated with the forests or rivers, a fair number live in the coastal waters. Many have succumbed to the blood taint, however, becoming twisted, monstrous creatures.

Likewise, humans themselves have been transformed into monsters. The most well known are the grotesques — terrifying mockeries of humans infused with a portion of Kadum's power. Others are less obvious, such as the scar twin. Throughout the coastal settlements the danger and gripping fear are always present. Anyone could become something corrupted and prey upon his brethren.

Another threat is the abyssal lamprey, a creature which is particularly common throughout the Blood Sea. In any encounter of at least EL 3 that involves an animal, a chance exists that at least one of the animals involved is infested with an abyssal lamprey. This chance is 1% along the coasts, 2% in the coastal shallows and 4% in the central Blood Sea. For EL purposes the lamprey is treated as an additional monster in the encounter when it appears.

Humanoids

Humans are the most numerous coastal dwellers, among the divine races. Lizardfolk are a

common sight along the coasts as well, quite comfortable in the water and often constructing submarine lairs. Pisceans, kuo-toa and other humanoids are rarely encountered, preferring the deep sea. They feel penned in by the land but attack coastal settlements from time to time.

Humans and elves both rely on the sea for shipping. As dangerous as even the Blood Sea is, sea trade remains faster and relatively safer than overland travel. Pirates also sail the Blood Sea, particularly those of the Toe Islands. While they occasionally venture into the deep sea, most prefer to stay close to the coasts. This is both safer and close to where most of their targets are.

Hazards

The sea is vast, and concentrations of life are relatively sparse. Encounters while traveling the open sea by ship should substitute days for hours. When close to shore, in a shoal of fish, drifting in fishing waters or traveling close to a port, encounters are generated normally.

Grounding, Navigation: One particularly dangerous hazard along the coast is simply running aground. Water levels and landmarks are sometimes untrustworthy, and if the navigator loses the ship's position it is a simple matter to smash the ship into submerged rocks. This is one of the essential problems ship captains face. If they sail too far from land, they run the risk of becoming lost or being attacked by denizens of the deep ocean. If they sail too close, one squall could smash their ship.

Traveling within 20 miles of shore ensures the ship will stay on course. Storms are considered one category worse when calculating ship damage, however.

A ship within 100 miles of shore may become lost from time to time. This is treated as a normal chance of becoming lost in wilderness, except the check is made only once per day and uses Knowledge (navigation) rather than Survival. Familiar regions are treated as "moor or hill," having DC 6 with charts and maps. Fog causes poor visibility, requiring more difficult checks. In storms and other more trying circumstances these checks must be made per hour.

Additionally, while lost the ship has a 10% chance per week of running aground (roll unprepared ship damage). This climbs to 50% if the ship moves within 20 miles of a shoreline. A DC 25 Spot check can prevent running aground, but speed is halved until the shallows are negotiated. While within shallows the effective severity of storms is again increased for ship

damage, as the possibility exists for the ship to be dashed against rocks.

The open sea carries no danger of running aground — barring Kadum's leviathan. Traveling without a firm course, however, can greatly extend a trip.

Hungry Reef: Coral reefs are colonies of millions of tiny animals which filter the water for small bits of food. Unfortunately, this is a dangerous trait in the Blood Sea, as the blood can concentrate within the coral, causing it to become a Blood Sea mutant. While the coral can "bite," it can target only creatures in contact with its surface. Its effective size is based on the amount of skin touching — Tiny for a hand, Medium if a Medium creature is lying on it prone.

Often only a small portion of a reef has been corrupted, but without care the mutant coral will spread. Merfolk often take it upon themselves to destroy this taint in reefs outside the visibly bloodied waters.

A given region of coral is treated as a single creature, but it cannot move or attack except with spell-like abilities or special attacks. In addition, the coral cannot be attacked normally but must be killed through area attacks. As long as an area attack succeeds in doing any damage, the area of coral is killed. Fast healing and regeneration replace damage over the entire coral, so a patch killed by 4 points of damage will recover before another patch killed by 6.

Tainted coral gains +1 Intelligence per 10 foot by 10 foot patch of coral. At Int 6 it gains an empathic link with any native sea creatures within a mile or other colonies of mutant coral. At Int 8 it can communicate telepathically with any being capable of speech. It uses these abilities to command resident creatures, many of which are also Blood Sea mutants or blood-tainted. A hungry reef is treated as CR 1 per each 10 foot by 10 foot patch and is of the Aberration type. Total CR is calculated as normal for a large number of individuals — a 50 foot by 20 foot patch is 10 CR 1 individuals or CR 8.

The power of a coral reef is primarily in its servitors. A hungry reef controls a number of animals with a CR equal to itself -2. A 50 foot by 20 foot patch of reef is served by six manta rays or octopi.

Kelp Forest: These long, tan, rubbery strands can grow in dense swaying masses under the sea. They are commonly found in depths of 20–50 feet but can be found deeper provided they have stable rock to grow on. The strands grow longer than the distance to the surface, some of the length breaking off during rough weather. For movement and visibility purposes consider kelp forests to be equivalent to regular forests — with groves, clearings and other variations

Table 1–4: The Coastal Blood Sea (CR 3)

Encounter Chance: 4% per hour; 2% per hour at night (24% per six hours; 12% per six hours at night)

d% Day	d% Night	Encounter	# Encountered	CR	At EL	Source
01–05	01–06	Blood maiden	1d4+2	1/2	3	CC2
06–10	07–11	Blood Sea jellyfish	1	1	1	CC2
11–15	12–17	Blood zombie	1d4+1	1	3	CC2
16–23	18–19	Crocodile*	1	3	3	MM
24–26	20	Crocodile, giant*	1	5	5	MM
27	21–23	Dire shark	1	9	9	MM
28–33	24–29	Ebon eel	1	1	1	CCRev
34–35	30–31	Gibbering moulder	1	5	5	MM
36	32–33	Hag, sea	1	4	4	MM
37–44	34–36	Lizardfolk**	1d2+1	2	4	MM
45–51	37–47	Lurker below	1	3	3	CC2
52–53	48–50	Sprite, nixie**	1d3+1	2	5	MM
54–57	51–56	Octopus*	1	2	2	MM
—	57	Octopus, giant*	1	9	9	MM
58	—	Patrol ship	See below	1/2	9	MM
59–60	58	Pirate ship	See below	1/2	8	MM
61–64	59	Porpoise*	1	1	1	MM
65	—	Porpoise*	2d10	1	8	MM
66–68	60	Razorfin dolphin	1	2	2	CC2
69	61	Red colony**	1	4	4	CCRev
70–73	62–66	Sailing ship	See below	1/4	3	MM
74–75	67	Sea lion**	1	5	5	MM
76–81	68–74	Seaspark	2d3+3	1/2	4	CCRev
82–84	75–78	Shark, huge*	1	5	5	MM
85–94	79–92	Shark, large*	1	3	3	MM
95–97	93–97	Squid*	1	2	2	MM
98	98	Vermin host, scavenger crab†	1	3	3	CC2
99–00	99–00	Windrider	1	4	4	CC2

Blood Sea mutant*: These creatures have the Blood Sea mutant template (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie, Appendix).

***Blood-tainted*: These creatures have the blood-tainted template (see Appendix).

† *Vermin host*: This vermin host has given up most pretense of being human. He lurks near docks or shipping lanes and looks for an opportunity to infest new hosts. He might pretend to be a shipwrecked sailor or sneak aboard a ship at night. Alternatively, have no initial encounter. The vermin host will wait below the water line for something to happen to the ship and will attack then. He will become bored if nothing happens within 1d6+1 hours and take some other action. Treat a scavenger crab vermin host as a cockroach vermin host with Swim 30 ft. and ability to breathe underwater.

Patrol ship: A longboat manned with 40 conscripts, 10 warriors, two 2nd-level warrior lieutenants, a 5th-level wizard and a 7th-level fighter ship captain. Near Mithril the captain is often a paladin, and near both Mithril and Hedrad the wizard is usually replaced with a cleric. If attacked a patrol ship may try to signal any nearby comrades, but with only a 10% chance any help will arrive — and at that, only within 1d20 minutes. Close to a port help is more available.

Pirate ship: Near Mithril and Hedrad these groups are stationed out of the Toe Islands. Further south these may be “privateers” operating in the service of Calastia. The ship is a longship crewed by 40 conscripts, 10 warriors, two 2nd-level warrior lieutenants and a 5th-level fighter pirate captain. The conscripts are expert NPC class and will fight only until they are wounded. They man the oars and load goods — they are not significant combatants. The captain will avoid fights that are stacked against him. His targets are merchant ships, and he will avoid patrolling warships. The attack involves arrows — flaming only in dire emergency. When the ship closes a grapple will be thrown, the ships pulled close, and boarders go to work. The aim is to subdue the crew and take command, sailing it back to a pirate port to be unloaded and taken as a new ship. Well-to-do passengers will be held for ransom. Anyone who looks like trouble will be killed.

Sailing ship: A merchant vessel with a crew of 20. Ten are warriors; the others will surrender without a fight if attacked, though will still follow orders to move the ship. The cargo is worth 200 gp per ton, and the ship has d10 x 10 tons of cargo. News of attacking this ship has a chance of reaching local authorities within 1d10 days. This chance is 5% if the entire crew is put to death, 20% otherwise.

in density. Sea urchins feed on kelp forests, thinning or cutting them back.

In the Blood Sea, of course, such forests can be quite a bit nastier. A patch of kelp tainted by Kadum’s blood should be treated as if a tree targeted by the

awaken spell, with the Blood Sea mutant or blood-tainted template applied. The size varies — a large patch may be converted into a single sizable “being,” or a few strands of kelp might change into a smaller mass.

Deep Blood Sea

The deep ocean is in several ways much like a desert. The top layer receives sunlight, but as living things decay they fall down to the ocean bottom. Consequently, nutrients concentrate far from the energy that drives life.

Deep ocean currents move like rivers through the ocean at large. They circulate in massive patterns stretching throughout the oceans of the Scarred Lands. These currents gather up nutrients from the cold bottom, eventually coming to the surface near coasts and fueling the life there.

But the ocean bottom is not devoid of features. Numerous seamounts exist, rocky prominences that do not reach the surface. Ocean currents rise along these mounts, feeding plankton and thus other animals above. These seamounts are visible from ships, typically due to the wheeling birds and other signs of life. These are oases in the desert ocean.

In the Blood Sea, Kadum's blood forms its own current. It is warm, compared to the deep oceanic waters, and rises as it mixes. This surge forms a surge, an imperceptible mounding of water. It is most obvious as the Outward Current, a flow that moves from the inner Blood

Sea to its edges. This current is somewhat irregular and can confuse navigators, raising the DC of any trips taken through the deep Blood Sea by 2.

The mixture of titan blood and nutrient-rich waters means that the seamounts and islands of the inner Blood Sea are particularly fertile.

Plants

Plants of any kind are fairly rare in the deep ocean. Other than occasional drifts, the major exception is weed islands. These are mats of thick seaweed which form floating communities. These are most common in a region several days north of Termana, where a combination of currents creates relatively still waters.

Most seaweed encountered is blood-tainted, having become somewhat more hunter than a plant.

Animals

In the deep ocean mobility is key. Whales, seals, squid and birds rely on traveling long distances between fertile regions. Seasonal migrations can take schools of hundreds of thousands to millions of fish between different regions. Many of the surviving populations have learned to survive in an ocean of



Table 1–5: The Deep Blood Sea (CR 9)

Encounter Chance: 2% per hour; 1% per hour at night (12% per six hours; 6% per six hours at night)

d% Day	d% Night	Encounter	# Encountered	CR	At EL	Source
01–02	01–05	Blood kraken	1	9	9	CCRev
03–06	06–08	Blood Sea jellyfish	3d6	1	8	CC2
07–11	09–14	Blood zombie	2d8+3	1	8	CC2
12	15–16	Blood zombie	1d20+20	1	10	CC2
13–20	17–24	Dire shark	1	9	9	MM
21	25–26	Dire shark	1d4+1	9	12	MM
22–23	27	Dire shark**	1d4+2	10	14	MM
24	28	Ghost ship	See below	2	8	MM
25	29–30	Gibbering moulder	1	5	5	MM
26–30	31–35	Flayed giant	1d4+1	6	9	CC2
31–32	36–38	Hag, brine	See below	9	9	CCRev
33	39–40	Hag, sea	covey	4	12	MM
34	41	Kadum's leviathan	1	15		CC2
35–40	42–44	Keel crusher	1	9	9	CC2
41–42	45–47	Kuo-toa	See below	3	8	MM
43–48	48–53	Locathah	See below	1	9	MM
49–50	—	Merfolk	See below	1/2	11	MM
51	54–55	Piscean	raiding party	—	11	CC2
52	56	Piscean	war band	—	15	CC2
53	57	Piscean, black	1	7	7	CC2
54	58	Piscean, green	1d4+1	2	5	CC2
55–59	59–61	Piscean, green	1d6+6	2	9	CC2
60	62	Piscean, red	1	12	12	CC2
61	63–64	Piscean, red	2	12	14	CC2
62–64	65	Ratman, foamer	war band	1	13	CCRev
65–68	66–68	Razorfin dolphin	2d4+1	2	7	CC2
69–70	69–70	Sea lion**	2d4+3	5	12	MM
71–72	71–72	Seaspark	1d12x10	1/2	11	CCRev
73–83	73–84	Shark, large*	1d4+1	3	9	MM
84–88	85–89	Sprite, nixie**	1d10+5	2	9	MM
89	90	Squid, giant*	1	10	10	MM
90–93	91–93	Triton**	1d4+1	5	8	MM
94	94	Water elemental, huge**	1	8	8	MM
95	95	Whale, baleen*	1	6	6	MM
96	96	Whale, cachalot*	1	7	7	MM
97–98	97–98	Whale, orca*	1	6	6	MM
99–00	99–00	Water elemental, large**	1	6	6	MM

Blood Sea mutant*: These creatures have the Blood Sea mutant template (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie, Appendix).

***Blood-tainted*: These creatures have the blood-tainted template (see Appendix).

Brine hag and her pets: The brine hag (*female brine hag*, *Sor4*) has a school (1d4+1) of Blood Sea mutant huge sharks accompanying her. Some brine hags enjoy using a combination of *alter self* and *charm person* to lure sailors to their dooms. Some tales suggest they may consummate their seduction — and then consume their “suitor.”

Ghost ship: The ship is solid and in good working order but is crewed by 1d6+6 ghosts. Before the ship appears the weather will calm and a thick fog will obscure visibility. There is only a 20% chance that the ghosts will attack, though GMs are encouraged to decide whose ghosts they are and what their disposition would be to the party. If the ghosts are attacked or successfully affected by spells they will retaliate fully.

Kuo-toa patrol: The kuo-toa serve the pisceans, so will alert their masters if trouble unfolds. A patrol consists of 1d3+1 kuo-toa and one 3rd-level lash (druid). All are blood-tainted.

Locathah patrol: The locathah serve the pisceans grudgingly and will alert their masters in case of trouble. A patrol consists of 1d10+10 locathah, two 3rd-level sergeants (fighters) and a leader, a 3rd–6th-level barbarian. All are blood-tainted.

Merfolk work gang: Merfolk are kept under careful control by the pisceans. Those allowed outside are demoralized and will obey the pisceans without question. A work gang consists of 1d10+10 blood-tainted merfolk, two green pisceans and a green piscean leader of 1st–4th level.

blood, avoiding the worst areas and migrating when the environment is too stressful. Still, many have succumbed. Blood-tainted and Blood Sea mutants are now quite common throughout the deep Blood Sea.

Monsters

Many of the large and powerful monsters of the Blood Sea live far from land, Kadum's leviathan being one of the most infamous. Some of these huge predators can wipe out huge schools of fish or other animals and move through the sea leaving empty water in their wake.

Humanoids

The deep Blood Sea is home to a wide variety of intelligent races — locathah, merfolk, tritons, kuo-toa and, most significantly, pisceans. They rose to prominence with the alliance of Queen Ran and the blood kraken. While that alliance has sundered and Queen Ran controls the region around Kadum, pisceans dominate much of the open sea.

Humans and elves can also be found on the high seas — in merchant vessels, particularly on routes between Termana and Ghelspad. Sailing between these two continents without crossing the heart of the Blood Sea would take two to three times as long, possibly longer.

Hazards

These hazards apply to regions further than 100 miles from shore.

Surge (Hazard; CR 2): A number of phenomena, from earthquakes to volcanic eruptions, can cause massive amounts of water to rise up from the ocean. These create veritable mountains which move quickly and are difficult to see. During clear daylight conditions, anyone keeping watch may make a DC 15 Spot check. The same check is DC 18 or 20 at night and may be as high as 25 in dense fog.

If the surge is spotted the navigator can make a Profession (sailor) check (DC 15) to turn the vessel into the surge. Otherwise the navigator may still make the check to notice and turn the ship as an emergency, but the DC is 25. The success of this determines whether the ship is prepared or not (consult Table 1–3).

Blood Surges (Hazard; CR 3): Similar to a conventional surge, these are created when pockets of concentrated blood bubble up to the surface. In addition to the normal effects of a surge, everyone exposed on deck must make a DC 12 Fortitude saving throw to avoid blood fever. The next check to see if blood barnacles will form is made at –2. Sometimes these surges are accompanied by Blood Sea mutants, blood-tainted creatures or pisceans.

Scarlet Vortex (Hazard; CR 5): While Kadum's blood mixes primarily with the sea, this liquid is often

sucked up in water spouts and other atmospheric phenomena. Here it can take terrible forms. A scarlet vortex is something like a blood-tainted air elemental but with less coherent form. It is a roiling mass of blood vapor, looking for something to terrorize — ships being a natural target.

A scarlet vortex can take the form of a sudden squall or rain bloody winds on characters and force a DC 12 Fortitude save to avoid blood fever. It can do either once per day before needing to recuperate its strength, but it will follow ships, trying to do some damage.

The vortex is considered a 5 HD air elemental but is immune to physical damage. A *gust of wind* will disperse it for 1d3 hours, after which it will resume chasing the ship but be unable to take any other action for the rest of the day. *Control weather* will destroy it completely, as will encountering other storms.

Blood Sea Islands

The rolling open ocean is home to hundreds of small islands. Some are above water level for only short periods or are tiny bits of rock jutting above the waves. A number of islands of significant size remain to be found in the surge of bloody ocean.

Islands are generally either bits of a continent cut off by water or new mounds of rock formed by volcanic action. A rare few are also formed by coral reefs building up over a seamount. The islands close to land tend to be older, covered with soil and vegetation. Marshes and other wetlands are common. The most notable chain of islands tied to a mainland is the Border Archipelago, which extends from southeastern Calastia toward Termana.

Volcanic islands, on the other hand, are much younger. Though they have soil, the islands tend toward craggy rocks and sand. The Blood Sea has a number of volcanic islands formed during the Divine War. These islands are rather barren, with some scrub and tenacious grasses beginning to establish themselves. Seabirds have roosted on a few of them, but animals are found mainly in protected shallow waters.

In the Blood Sea, these islands can be safe havens to travelers. The larger islands may have fresh water from rainfall and untainted game to eat. Unfortunately, these qualities are attractive to other creatures as well, and blood taint can spread on the wind.

Plants

Blood Sea islands are often ringed by kelp beds, while the land hosts a variety of trees and quick-growing scrub. Northern islands are less hospitable, given a combination of cold, high winds and lack of reliable rain.



Animals

The animals found on islands often show some strange variations from similar animals on mainlands, particularly on volcanic islands. Regions far from land are colonized by birds and animals capable of swimming. Before the Divine War the region that is now the Blood Sea had a lower water level. Consequently, many of the islands have comparatively shrunk since. In combination with the war itself, island environments are in turmoil, and many have had significant die-offs.

The influence of Kadum's blood has an impact on many islands, depending on prevailing currents. Those to the south, ringed by coral reefs, may gain some protection. These reefs concentrate the influence of the blood, however, so pose a danger to the island.

Islands in the south close to Termana feature a number of monkeys, many of which are Blood Sea mutants or blood-tainted. Sea turtles dig out nests on sandy shores for their eggs. While they avoid the scarlet sands of some beaches, blood-stained water still seeps into many of them.

Monsters

Islands are home to a wide variety of monsters, from blood-maddened elementals to terrifying swarms of tainted flesh strippers. Tremendous variety exists, even in islands close to one another.

One fairly common creature is the arboreal octopus. These are Blood Sea mutants with unusual endurance — they may spend 2d6 hours out of the water before needing to return. They rest in tidal pools, pulling themselves up into the trees at night to hunt. Arboreal octopi are clever and patient omnivores, eating everything from fruit to eggs in nests.

Humanoids

While pisceans and their slaves occasionally make use of islands or island shallows, the most common humanoid inhabitants are lizardfolk and feral humans. Many of these humans were once crew members of ships traveling between Ghelspad and Termana. Whether due to storm or piscean attack, they find themselves marooned on the small islands. Forced to choose between eating tainted foods or starvation, the degeneration is inexorable.

In the throws of taint, infested with the thoughts and memories of someone they dimly recognize as the Father Beneath the Waves, these humans have become crude worshippers. Those capable of some discipline become adepts. Any would-be rescuers quickly find themselves trussed up as sacrifices to the hungry waters.

Table 1–6: Blood Sea Islands (CR 6)

Encounter Chance: 8% per hour; 8% per hour at night (48% per six hours; 48% per six hours at night)

d% Day	d% Night	Encounter	# Encountered	CR	At EL	Source
01–03	01–03	Air elemental, large**	1	6	6	MM
04–05	04–05	Angler ooze	1	3	3	CCRev
06–08	06–09	Blood maiden	1d4+2	1/2	3	CC2
09–10	10–12	Blood zombie	2d8+3	1	8	CC2
11	13–14	Blood zombie	1d20+1	1	11	CC2
12	15	Community	See below	1	12	CC2/MM
13–18	16–17	Crocodile*	1	3	3	MM
19–23	18–19	Crocodile*	1d6	3	6	MM
24–25	20	Crocodile, giant*	1	5	5	MM
26–28	21	Dire monitor*	1	4	4	CCRev
29–38	22–35	Dire rat*	1d10+10	1/2	6	MM
39–42	36–38	Flesh strippers**	1d5x10	1/2	9	CC2
43–44	39–43	Hag, swamp	See below	6	6	CCRev
45–47	44–46	Mere-lurker*	1d6+4	1/2	5	CCRev
48–50	47–48	Miredwellers**	1d6+4	3	9	CCRev
51–62	49–56	Monkey**	1d4x10	1/4	6	MM
63	57–60	Monstrous spider, large*	1	3	3	MM
64–68	61–67	Monstrous spider, large*	1d4+1	3	6	MM
69–70	68–71	Octopus*	1	2	2	MM
71–72	72	Ratman, foamer	war band	1	13	CCRev
73–77	73–77	Red colony**	1d2+1	4	6	CCRev
78	78–79	River nymph†	2d8	4	10	CCRev
79–83	80–82	Sea lion**	2d4+3	5	12	MM
84–86	83	Sea lion**	1	5	5	MM
87–88	84–87	Sprite, grig**	1d3+1	2	5	MM
89	88	Sprite, grig**	2d4 x10	2	13	MM
90–91	89–91	Swamp gobbler**	2d3	4	8	CCRev
92–94	92–94	Water elemental, large**	1	6	6	MM
95–97	95–96	War party	See below	1	7	CC2/MM
98–00	97–00	Windrider	1	4	4	CC2

Blood Sea mutant:* These creatures have the Blood Sea mutant template applied to them (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie, Appendix).

***Blood-tainted:* These creatures have the blood-tainted template applied to them (see Appendix).

†*River nymph pod:* The river nymphs are always feral, regardless of phase of moon. In addition, they are blood-tainted.

Community: 1d20+20 1st-level warriors, 1 1st–4th-level fighter per five, 1 1st–4th-level adept per 10, and a 5th–8th-level fighter or druid elder. All are blood-tainted. Roll 1d20 for group composition: 1–12, lizardfolk; 13–17, humans; 18, elvish; 19, blood-tainted zombies, with larger zombies instead of leaders; 20, grotesques, with grotesque herders instead of fighters, adepts and elder. This should be rolled only once per island, unless the island is big enough for several different warring communities to exist.

Swamp hag: The hag is a 1st-level adept who controls a group of 2d6 blood-tainted human warriors.

War party: This war party consists of five 1st-level warriors and one 2nd–4th-level fighter who leads them. All are blood-tainted. Roll 1d20 for group composition: 1–12, lizardfolk; 13–17, humans; 18, elvish; 19, blood-tainted zombies, with larger zombies instead of leaders; 20, grotesques, led by a grotesque herder.

Pirates and merchants alike work to establish safe landings along the major routes, particularly between Ghelspad and Termana. The Border Archipelago is home to a few small towns that serve primarily as provision depots for Calastia’s colony of Virduk’s Promise. The islands off of the Bloodrain Woods provide safe stops for ships traveling along the southeast coast of Ghelspad. These island communities are more like military outposts than towns, and

frequently all of the inhabitants are evacuated before monsoon season.

Hazards

The hazards outlined in Table 1–6 apply to the beach, wetlands and interior of Blood Sea islands. For the shallow waters off an island use Table 1–4: Coastal Blood Sea, but replace lizardfolk results with the war party indicated in Table 1–6.

Chapter Two: Beneath the Crimson Waves

The Litten Realm

I remember when I first learned the spell. I think I spent almost every waking hour under the sea for a good few months. My teachers were quite cross — I had just about abandoned all my lessons. This was in far-off Darakene, mind you, and the waters were — well.

It was like a realm of dreams. Misty light sifting down through a holy ceiling of ever-changing stained glass. Wispy films as big as trees waved from below, while fish like sticks and glass threads darted and danced about them.

Oh, there were dangers. Occasionally I would see the sleek side of a shark glimmer in the distance. A shame. There, sharks were — well, not tame. But graceful. They were beautiful and deadly in a pure sense. Belsameth winked at me from their white mouths.

And down further, dusk shrouded the mysteries of the deep from sight. A coy lady keeping her secrets for all but the most diligent of suitors. I think that's when I embraced my destiny. I did not see it as a burden, then. Of course, there the waters were clear.

— Feren the Seascryer, Journal #3, from the Mithril Archives

The Ocean World

To land dwellers, oceans often have a simple character. The shape of the ocean is proximity to land — the ocean is there close to the beach, where one can see fish and the surface receding into the depths, and then the dark blues of the deeper water. The ocean is eternal yet ever-changing. Gentle lapping ripples or white-peaked mountains of water, always approaching shore.

Beneath the waves lies a different face. From the shifting edge where the sea meets the land extends a huge flat expanse — the continental shelf. While this shelf descends somewhat the further one goes out to sea, the slope is rather gentle. Then comes the cliff, the edge of the shelf. It descends rapidly to incredible depths, flattening out again into the abyssal plain. As the name suggests, this is a deep, cold, dark region far from the warm sunlight leagues above.

The continental shelf has its own variations. Many of the features from the surface extend underwater, though shrouded in silt and mud. Mountain ranges extend, sometimes poking above the waves to form island chains, sometimes forming seamounts, islands below the water. Deep chasms cut into the shelf, extensions of river valleys.

Above the floor of the ocean hide other complexities. Channels of water move like massive tubular rivers, climbing from the abyssal depths to cross the shelves, eventually to descend once more. The salinity and temperature of these channels can be markedly different from those of the surrounding water.

The storms and forces above the water have dramatic influence on even the deep ocean. Storms can create huge waves, churning the coastal shallows. Large-scale wind systems push the ocean, creating effective “mountains” of water — storm surges. These result in turbulence along the ocean bottom. Rain can cool the ocean surface and reduce the salinity in wide areas, resulting in chaotic shifts in currents.

Some of this weather is undetectable above the waves. Earthquakes and undersea volcanoes echo for huge distances, creating massive surges. Rockslides from close to the surface into the deeper ocean form pressure waves that will travel hundreds of miles. Rain-flooded rivers can also create less powerful storms, with clouds of silt that roll along the ocean floor.

The sea witches and other scholars of the ocean understand that the influence of weather

goes both ways. Rivers of water move through the oceans. When these come to the surface or drop from the surface heat and moisture can be altered in the air above. Unusual upwellings of warm water, particularly thick with Kadum's blood, can drive fierce hurricanes. Cold currents from the north can dry the air and bring calmer seasons.

Down to a depth of a few hundred feet encounters are the same as the surface waters. Passing ships may escape notice, but some have sea witches and others aboard capable of patrolling below the waves. The lower waters use the Shelf Plains encounters, though they may be many leagues from the actual bottom. The northern regions of Termana use Kraken Shelf plains, while other coastal depths use the Piscean Shelf plains encounter chart.

Undersea Weather

Weather is determined with Table 1–2: Blood Sea Weather. The results have direct effects on water within 300 feet of the surface, possibly deeper if the currents are constricted against an ocean floor less than 1,000 feet deep. Mobility is hampered due to waves and currents. Blood and normal surges are possible hazards in the deep sea, caused by shifts in rocks or by volcanic eruptions.

Silt storms are associated with thunderstorms, downpours and hurricanes. During a silt storm visibility is limited to 5 feet x number of miles from shore.

During a bloodwind or blood monsoon deep currents draw concentrated blood up from the gore trenches. A DC 12 Survival check will identify these currents and allow the character to find a relatively safe place to hide. Characters who have not found a haven must make a DC 12 Fortitude saving throw to avoid contracting blood fever. This check is made once per day until the weather passes. During these storms any effort to resist rage has a –4 penalty.

Temperature falls to less than 40° Fahrenheit at a depth of 1,000 feet in most areas of the Blood Sea, requiring cold checks.

Denizens of the Deep

Much of the character of the living ocean is formed by two factors — light and nutrients. Sunlight penetrates 600–700 feet in seawater free of silt and other debris. With the murk of the Blood Sea, this is reduced to about 400 feet for much of the outer sea and 200 feet in the central waters.

Minute plants float just below the surface. Too close and they will be killed by intense

Table 2–1: Upper Blood Sea (CR 3)

Encounter Chance: 4% per hour; 2% per hour at night (24% per six hours; 12% per six hours at night)

d% Day	d% Night	Encounter	# Encountered	CR	At EL	Source
01–05	01–06	Blood maiden	1d4+2	1/2	3	CC2
06–10	07–11	Blood Sea jellyfish	1	1	1	CC2
11–15	12–17	Blood zombie	1d4+1	1	3	CC2
16–23	18–19	Crocodile*	1	3	3	MM
24–26	20	Crocodile, Giant*	1	5	5	MM
27	21–23	Dire shark	1	9	9	MM
28–33	24–29	Ebon eel	1	1	1	CCRev
34–35	30–31	Gibbering moulder	1	5	5	MM
36	32–33	Hag, sea	1	4	4	MM
37–44	34–36	Lizardfolk**	1d2+1	2	4	MM
45–51	37–47	Lurker below	1	3	3	CC2
52–53	48–50	Sprite, nixie**	1d3+1	2	5	MM
54–57	51–56	Octopus*	1	2	2	MM
—	57	Octopus, giant*	1	9	9	MM
58	—	Patrol ship	See below	1/2	9	MM
59–60	58	Pirate ship	See below	1/2	8	MM
61–64	59	Porpoise*	1	1	1	MM
65	—	Porpoise*	2d10	1	8	MM
66–68	60	Razorfin dolphin	1	2	2	CC2
69	61	Red colony**	1	4	4	CCRev
70–73	62–66	Sailing ship	See below	1/4	3	MM
74–75	67	Sea lion**	1	5	5	MM
76–78	68–71	Shark, huge*	1	5	5	MM
79–88	72–84	Shark, large*	1	3	3	MM
89–97	85–98	Squid*	1	2	2	MM
98–99	99–00	Squid*	1d3	2	4	MM
00	00	Vermin host, scavenger crab†	1	3	3	CC2

Blood Sea mutant*: These creatures have the Blood Sea mutant template applied to them (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie, Appendix).

***Blood-tainted*: These creatures have the blood-tainted template applied to them (see Appendix).

† *Vermin host*: This vermin host has given up most pretense of being human. He lurks near docks or shipping lanes and looks for an opportunity to infest new hosts. He might pretend to be a shipwrecked sailor or sneak aboard a ship at night. Alternatively, have no initial encounter. The vermin host will wait below the water line for something to happen to the ship and will attack then. He will become bored if nothing happens within 1d6+1 hours and take some other action. Treat a scavenger crab vermin host as a cockroach vermin host with Swim 30 ft. and ability to breathe underwater.

Patrol ship: A longboat manned with 40 conscripts, 10 warriors, two 2nd-level warrior lieutenants, a 5th-level wizard and a 7th-level fighter ship captain. Near Mithril the captain is often a paladin, and near both Mithril and Hedrad the wizard is usually replaced with a cleric. If attacked a patrol ship may try to signal any nearby comrades, but with only a 10% chance any help will arrive — and at that, only within 1d20 minutes. Close to a port help is more available.

Pirate ship: Near Mithril and Hedrad these groups are stationed out of the Toe Islands. Further south these may be “privateers” operating in the service of Calastia. The ship is a longship crewed by 40 conscripts, 10 warriors, two 2nd-level warrior lieutenants and a 5th-level fighter pirate captain. The conscripts are expert NPC class and will fight only until they are wounded. They man the oars and load goods — they are not significant combatants. The captain will avoid fights that are stacked against him. His targets are merchant ships, and he will avoid patrolling warships. The attack involves arrows — flaming only in dire emergency. When the ship closes a grapple will be thrown, the ships pulled close, and boarders go to work. The aim is to subdue the crew and take command, sailing it back to a pirate port to be unloaded and taken as a new ship. Well-to-do passengers will be held for ransom. Anyone who looks like trouble will be killed.

Sailing ship: A merchant vessel with a crew of 20. Ten are warriors; the others will surrender without a fight if attacked, though will still follow orders to move the ship. The cargo is worth 200 gp per ton, and the ship has d10 x 10 tons of cargo. News of attacking this ship has a chance of reaching local authorities within 1d10 days. This chance is 5% if the entire crew is put to death, 20% otherwise.

sunlight. Too far and they do not receive enough light. Equally minute animals feed on these plants, providing the basic sustenance for fish and, thus, all other animals of the upper ocean.

Unfortunately, the nutrients inevitably drift downward, in the form of excretia and dead creatures. They rain softly down to the ocean bottom, forming a thick organic mud. The result is that the surface is poor in the minerals and substances life needs to flourish.

Two major sources for nutrients exist. The first is upwellings of water from the ocean floor, where all that valuable material has piled up. Riverlike currents called gyres pick up these sediments as they cross the deep ocean floor, bringing it — eventually — back to the continental shelves and sometimes up to the surface.

The second source is rivers. Organic material and minerals from weathered rock pour into the ocean. In some river deltas the water turns opaque with the silt released. Often wetlands may be disguising the outflow. A coastal marsh can be a sign of a subterranean river coming close to the surface. Between the movement of water and the drift of material from the marsh itself, the water nearby will teem with fish.

Kelp forests typically form where a stable upwelling of deep waters exists. As reefs do, they form a secure place for fish, crabs, sea urchins and many other animals to spawn and feed.

Baleen whales are unusually large animals that feed on krill, tiny shrimp that feed on the even smaller animals and plants. The majority of the tiny plants and animals feed huge numbers of small fish. These, in turn, feed the vast array of large animals and monsters found in the oceans.

Most animals in the ocean are migratory. Regions ideal for food are not usually ideal for the safety of mating and raising young. In addition, many of the surges in fish population are seasonal or vary, particularly in temperate or cool climates.

Life in the ocean also hints at possible connections between Kadum and life on land. Many land monsters, particularly aberrations, show a similarity to the common animals of the sea. Explorers coming across a sea pen or squid for the first time might suppose they are some type of monstrous offspring. In the Blood Sea, of course, the dividing line becomes less clear.

Some scholars of the divine races wonder, when faced with such mysteries, whether the current Blood Sea might not be a reprise of some much earlier event.

Hazards

Haze: Water absorbs light over long distances, creating a haze. In pure seawater visibility is limited to 500 feet — and at that, objects are made out only vaguely. In the waters of the Blood Sea conditions are worse. Visibility is typically limited to 200 feet, obscuring details with a reddish-purple mist. Light levels drop similarly. Below 200 feet the waters are twilight — below 500 feet is eternal night. Many animals use smell and hearing to track or avoid one another. Darkvision and blindsight are particularly common to the deep inhabitants of the Blood Sea.

Light sources are reduced to 2/3 radius of illumination, possibly less depending on visibility. Magical light that emits, such as *light*, is affected. Regions of light, such as that created by *daylight*, are not. Generally, attack spells are unaffected, such as *searing light*.

Aquatic Environment (Hazard; CR 7): A constant hazard is inherent in simply wandering around underwater. The CR applies per encounter — at least once a day, or once per hour for more intense encounters. This hazard applies below a depth of 100 feet, air being thus out of easy reach. Aquatic races are, of course, exempt from this hazard.

Gyre Current: The gyres — massive rivers that move through the ocean — form huge areas of turbulence along the ocean floor. Other currents can create similar effects. Treat this as rough water, with regions of whitewater (see DMG, Chapter 3, “Aquatic Terrain”, *Flowing Water*).

Concentrated Blood (Hazard; CR 3): Along the bottom of the Blood Sea Kadum’s blood can pool in thicker concentrations. Moving within 20 feet of the bottom requires DC 15 Spot checks every hour of travel to avoid stumbling into one of them. Contact with this blood requires a blood fever DC 12 Fortitude check. Concentrated blood has an effective SR of 12.

Rage Mist (Hazard; CR 7): Kadum’s blood is not a singular item. In the deep sea it has changed, refined into different forms. One form is perceptible as a fine orange mist — admittedly difficult to spot among the general scarlet waters. A DC 30 Spot check can detect the rage mist as it rolls in. Those within the rage mist are subjected to an effect identical to a *symbol of discord*, as if cast by a 15th-level caster. The mist relies on contact and can be dissipated with *control weather*. Rage mist drifts at speed 10 and so can be escaped by moving in the correct direction. The size of the mist is 1d10 x 100 ft. in diameter. Any saves to resist rage are made at –4 while under the influence of the mist.

Table 2–2: Piscean Shelf Plains (CR 6)

The ocean between 100 and 600 feet in depth, above the continental shelf within piscean territory.

Encounter Chance: 4% per hour; 2% per hour at night (24% per six hours; 12% per six hours at night)

d% Day	d% Night	Encounter	# Encountered	CR	At EL	Source
01–02	01–02	Earth elemental, large**	1	6	6	MM
03	03	Hag, brine	See below	9	9	CCRev
04–05	04–05	Kuo-toa	See below	3	8	MM
06–07	06–07	Locathah	See below	1	9	MM
08–09	08–09	Merfolk	See below	1/2	11	CC2/MM
10–17	10–17	Octopus*	1	2	2	MM
18	18	Octopus, giant*	1	9	9	MM
19	19	Piscean	war band	—	15	CC2
20	20	Piscean, black	1	7	7	CC2
21–24	21–22	Piscean, green	1d4+1	2	5	CC2
25–26	23	Piscean, green	1d6+6	2	9	CC2
27–28	24–25	Piscean, red	1	12	12	CC2
29–37	26–35	Razorfin dolphin	2d4	2	6	CC2
38–45	36–43	Shark, huge*	1	5	5	MM
46–49	44–47	Shark, huge*	1d4+1	5	8	MM
50–59	48–56	Shark, large*	1d4+1	3	5	MM
60–73	57–69	Shark, medium*	2d4	2	6	MM
74–83	70–82	Squid*	1	2	2	MM
84	83	Squid, giant*	1	10	10	MM
85–87	84–86	Water elemental, large**	1	6	6	MM
88–90	86–91	Whale, baleen*	1	6	6	MM
91–99	92–99	Whale, orca*	1	6	6	MM
00	00	Whale, cachalot*	1	7	7	MM

***Blood Sea mutant:** These creatures have the Blood Sea mutant template (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**, Appendix).

****Blood-tainted:** These creatures have the blood-tainted template (see Appendix).

Brine hag and her pets: The brine hag (*female brine hag*, Sor4) has a school (1d4+1) of Blood Sea mutant huge sharks accompanying her.

Kuo-toa patrol: The kuo-toa serve the pisceans, so will alert their masters if trouble unfolds. A patrol consists of 1d3+1 kuo-toa and one 3rd-level lash (druid). All are blood-tainted.

Locathah patrol: The locathah serve the pisceans grudgingly and will alert their masters in case of trouble. A patrol consists of 1d10+10 locathah, two 3rd-level sergeants (fighters) and a leader, a 3rd–6th-level barbarian. All are blood-tainted.

Merfolk work gang: Merfolk are kept under careful control by the pisceans. Those allowed outside are demoralized and will obey the pisceans without question. A work gang consists of 1d10+10 blood-tainted merfolk, two green pisceans and a green piscean leader of 1st–4th level.

The Empires Below

The ocean east of Ghelspad was once home to a variety of civilizations. Merfolk, locathah, kuo-toa, tritons, pisceans and other creatures established dominion over different territories. Some, such as tritons and merfolk, formed alliances, while the other races fought for domination.

After the Divine War the vast sea became red with a titan's blood. Many of the sea folk went mad, twisted by the powerful corruption. The pisceans and kraken found that the blood gave them a perverse strength. Some of the normally green pisceans blackened as the blood thickened within them.

The black pisceans grew to prominence in their race, becoming a ruling caste. It did not take long for the pisceans to discover the source of the blood. They began to worship the titan.

Queen Ran — powerful leader of the blood kraken — dominated the Blood Sea after defeating her brother shortly after the Divine War. The pisceans allied with her, and both sought to restore Kadum's power. Under this hegemony, the other races were enslaved to serve the blood kraken and pisceans.

The blood monsoon shattered this unity. Pisceans conjecture that Queen Ran was attempting to exert some control over Kadum, resulting in a massive deluge of blood.

Table 2–3: Kraken Shelf Plains (CR 6)

The ocean between 100 and 600 feet in depth, above the continental shelf within Queen Ran's territory.

Encounter Chance: 4% per hour; 2% per hour at night (24% per six hours; 12% per six hours at night)

d% Day	d% Night	Encounter	# Encountered	CR	At EL	Source
01–02	01–03	Blood kraken	1	9	9	CCR _{ev}
03–04	04–05	Blood kraken†	entourage	—	12	CCR _{ev} /MM
05	06	Blood kraken††	war band	—	15	CCR _{ev} /MM
06–11	07–12	Earth elemental, large**	1	6	6	MM
12	13	Hag, brine	See below	9	9	CCR _{ev}
13–14	14–15	Locathah	See below	1	9	MM
15–16	16–17	Merfolk	See below	1/2	11	CC2/MM
17–23	18–24	Octopus*	1	2	2	MM
24–26	25–26	Octopus, giant*	1	9	9	MM
27–36	27–36	Razorfin dolphin	2d4	2	6	CC2
37–43	37–42	Shark, huge*	1	5	5	MM
44–45	43–44	Shark, huge*	1d4+1	5	8	MM
46–53	45–51	Shark, large*	1d4+1	3	5	MM
54–73	52–72	Shark, medium*	2d4	2	6	MM
74–81	73–82	Squid*	1	2	2	MM
82–84	83–86	Squid, giant*	1	10	10	MM
85–86	87–88	Water elemental, large**	1	6	6	MM
87–89	89–91	Whale, baleen*	1	6	6	MM
90–98	91–99	Whale, orca*	1	6	6	MM
99–00	00	Whale, cachalot*	1	7	7	MM

†*Blood kraken entourage:* A blood kraken and 2d20 medium Blood Sea mutant sharks.

††*Blood kraken war band:* Two blood krakens, three brine hags (*female brine hag*, *Sor4*) and 2d3 x10 medium Blood Sea mutant sharks.

Blood Sea mutant:* These creatures have the Blood Sea mutant template (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie, Appendix).

***Blood-tainted:* These creatures have the blood-tainted template (see Appendix).

Brine hag and her pets: The brine hag (*female brine hag*, *Sor4*) has a school (1d4+1) of Blood Sea mutant huge sharks accompanying her.

Locathah patrol: The locathah serve the pisceans grudgingly and will alert their masters in case of trouble. A patrol consists of 1d10+10 locathah, two 3rd-level sergeants (fighters) and a leader, a 3rd–6th-level barbarian. All are blood-tainted.

Merfolk work gang: Merfolk were originally enslaved by the pisceans, but the kraken find them useful slaves. Those allowed outside are demoralized and will obey the kraken without question. A work gang consists of 1d10+15 blood-tainted merfolk.

The pisceans and other forces were ordered to attack the coastal settlements. Driven by blood-fueled rage, the black pisceans did not stop to question these orders.

The ensuing mess, and loss of many valuable forces, caused the pisceans and many blood kraken to believe Queen Ran had betrayed them. It became clear that she did not have the holy mission of restoring Kadum in mind, but merely wanted power.

The pisceans now dominate much of the Blood Sea, led by Kiccooma, Devil Lord of the Deep out of Kiccoopul. Despite their convictions and efforts, however, Kiccooma has not managed to overthrow Queen Ran. She continues to rule in the south near Termana, supported by the Blood Bayou. Worse, she retains possession of Kadum.

Pisceans

Pisceans prefer ridges at a depth of 300 feet or more. Their cities are built into cliff faces in these undersea mountains. Settlements of most concern to Ghelspad lie near the Toe Islands and the Ashen Horns. The northern shallows of Termana were once home to some of their cities but are now in the control of Queen Ran. Cities also dot seamounts throughout the Blood Sea, and a few communities work in the cold depths of the abyssal plain.

Piscean cities have a number of plans. Some are sprawling labyrinthine structures, others are centralized with organized districts and sectors distinguished by purpose. In all cases the architecture is aquatic, with dizzying gaps be-

tween doorways and shafts instead of staircases. Some use *continual heat* stones or natural vents to provide upcurrents. While built open to the water, a few deeper chambers require ventilation. Slaves operate bellows mechanisms, but magic is occasionally used.

At the depths pisceans prefer, conditions are effectively equal to twilight during the day, fading to strong moonlight or starshine at greater depths. These are effectively dimmer where the blood is thicker. Pisceans have no natural ability to see in poor lighting, so use evergreen (see Appendix) to light their cities.

Coral watchtowers are common throughout the continental shelves. These are not natural constructions but were designed by merfolk in ages past. The pisceans enhance these towers through spells and blood, building or repairing towers with merfolk slaves. Watchtowers allow a guard to Spot ships and other forces magically. Spotting range is considered $2d6 \times 10$ miles for average ships and $6d6 \times 20$ feet for individuals.

Pisceans dominate a variety of slave races. The locathah have perhaps the most comfortable position, though one of utter servitude. They are valued for keeping their place and serving with little complaint. In return they enjoy a degree of autonomy and some freedom to move about the piscean communities. The kuo-toa and merfolk, both faithful worshippers of Manawe, are less fortunate. These slaves must serve without question and even under the best of circumstances have short, brutal lives.

Pisceans have experimented on their slaves, testing the capabilities of Kadum's blood. Slaves are also used in the highly dangerous missions to collect concentrated blood from gore trenches. Some merfolk have degenerated into a form of aquatic grotesque (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**). These are occasionally used in battle, but black pisceans enjoy these grotesques as a delicacy. Since the creation of red pisceans by overexposure to blood, black pisceans prefer to consume Kadum's blood through tainted foods or in measured vials.

Other creatures serve the pisceans. Small Blood Sea mutant squid, which have keen senses of smell, are trained as intelligent and perceptive watch-animals. Giant squid and whales both work as transport and war animals for pisceans. Some



Shipping and Tribute

Ships are guaranteed to be spotted moving through piscean territory, barring skilled magic. Pisceans will demand tribute of 2d6 x 100 gp along coasts, such as ships leaving Mithril or Hedrad. Once passing through the waters between Ghelspad and Termana an additional 2d6 x 100 gp are required.

This cost is in gold, gems or things of significant use, whether alchemical creations or even items simply enchanted with *continual flame*. Pisceans refuse to be paid in wheat, silver or other such goods that will spoil or corrode under the water.

A DC 15 Knowledge (law) check or DC 12 Knowledge (local: Blood Sea) check enables a character to use the most favorable interpretation of piscean law. A success means any charges are halved.

Not paying tribute means that the pisceans will retreat, gather forces and storm the boat later. All goods will be taken, and only a skeleton crew will be left to warn others of the consequences of failing to pay.

Paying tribute means the pisceans will hand over a small tablet — a receipt. Showing this to any pisceans or piscean slaves encountered will mean a 95% chance that the group will leave the ship without further trouble — assuming the ship crew doesn't start any. Red pisceans are insane with blood and have only a 25% chance of leaving without trouble.

While the pisceans have established rates for ships, they do not take kindly to aquatic explorations. Groups traveling below water will be seen as spies or invaders. It is barely within the realm of possibility that someone could negotiate escort through piscean territories, or make other arrangements — given sufficient inducement.

travel along sea lanes — the massive gyres that flow like rivers along the sea bottom. These roads can be quite turbulent. Spells such as *control weather* can ensure safe journeys.

Fish, crabs and other life are corralled through the pisceans' voice of the sea. A wide variety of delectables has been domesticated by their power, giving piscean cities a stable food supply.

Shifting currents can cause great difficulties in maintaining schools of fish. Some piscean cities have diverted sea currents through mas-

sive civic works projects. While tremendously difficult, this allows them to set up fertile waters where they want them.

A few piscean cities have experimented with diverting sea currents to control weather in various ways. They can cause hurricanes, bloodwinds, surges and even blood monsoons. All of these require DC 30 Knowledge (nature) checks and the efforts of thousands of pisceans. The weather may form within days under the best circumstances, but also may take months or years. A failure by more than 10 indicates great chaos, possibly disrupting currents over hundreds of miles.

Such a failure led to the destruction of piscean cities near Termana and the loss of territory to Queen Ran. Devil Lord Kiccooma has forbidden further experiments into this type of weather control, but a number of pisceans continue to research it quietly.

Pisceans are on the surface a patriarchal society, the truth being somewhat more complex. Males hold official power and legal rights. They may marry up to three wives and maintain eight concubines, though only the most powerful have so many.

The power of females remains significant. Many wives and concubines have significant say in being "chosen" as mates, and then wield power over which future wives or concubines are chosen. Females are larger and have a deep respect for the power of subtlety. They regard themselves as the true masters of the race, using males and male positions of power as tools in the females' feuds and machinations. While sexism is inherent in their culture, females wield much more power than in other patriarchal societies.

The strength of Kadum is often seen as a male power, and male red pisceans far outnumber females. Females can overplay their hand, however, and may find that the power of their males can destroy them. Ultimately, a female must work through males to accomplish her aims. Some ultimately decide to abandon their race and pursue their own agendas, though they face a lifetime of exile. Any piscean who abandons her "post" is considered a traitor and hunted down.

Map of the Western Empire

Northeastern Ghelspad is, among the pisceans, divided into four regions: the White Flow, Treaty Wall, Cresting Ranges and Sandy Ocean. The White Flow region is near Hedrad, where Lake Repose sends a strong flow of nutrient-rich fresh water deep into the Blood Sea.

The Sandy
Ocean

Plains of Lede

The Cresting
Ranges

• Mirhril

Ice
Islands

• Keekareelit

Blood
Basin

The Treaty
Wall

• Arxandooptul

Vesh

Celestial
Shelf

Lake Repose

• Hedrad

The Western
Empire

The White
Flow

• Luccoopokul



300 miles

Calastia

• Delis

• Uco Loopul

Treaty Wall lies along the Godsfacer Cliffs, which continue past the waterline and quickly fall to the deep abyss. The Cresting Ranges are the Toe Islands, part of an undersea line of ridges possibly torn by Kadum himself in his struggles. Finally, the Sandy Ocean is the far northern waters, where Kadum's blood clumps out of the sea in small gritty particles, almost like fine sand.

The Treaty Wall is one of the mysteries of the piscine realm. The green pisceans and less informed of the black pisceans know the name as a holdover of an old treaty between blood kraken and piscine. The treaty outlined a major border of holdings starting at the Godsfacer Cliffs. Ancient texts record use of the term going back several thousand years, however. Some black pisceans and blood kraken believe the name is actually a literary phrase, alluding to an agreement between land and sea, or between life and death. Prominent in the ancient records are enigmatic references to He Who Is Between. An unusual number of slarecian gatekeepers frequent the deep waters here, possibly the source of the reference.

The region has a number of strange attributes. The water at the base of the Godsfacer Cliffs is unusually warm, fertile and free of Kadum's blood. The land slopes deeply into a trench, from which this warm water flows. Within one mile of the cliffs a purification effect extends from 400 feet below water to the depths of this trench. Any taint is cleansed, though causing 1d6 nonlethal damage per HD in the process. Blood Sea mutants and other beings that are fundamentally changed by Kadum's blood take 1d6 regular damage per HD. Black pisceans avoid this area, though they send in slaves and green pisceans to investigate the phenomena. A number of unusual monsters and elementals live in the deep trench, and it is likely that gateways to other planes are somewhere below.

Lucoopokul, Golden Tower of Western Trade

The coral watchtower Lucoopokul is 800 feet tall, extending from the sea bottom to within a hundred feet of the surface. The tower is three hundred miles southwest of Hedrad. Lucoopokul is the main headquarters for patrols in the White Flow region. It also serves as the treasury for the region, gathering tribute before sending a portion on to the capital of Kiccoopul.

Lucoopokul is the home of plenipotentiary Makokriltopok and many of his consuls. The

tower looks like a blunt spire covered with bulbous white coral, disappearing down into the depths. Holes at various levels lead into small chambers. The uppermost levels have interconnections and doors to help seal against intruders, along with many secret openings to allow for counterattack. No significant internal shafts are below the upper 200 feet, however. Moving between various levels requires pisceans to exit the watchtower and move to a different entrance.

Levels of the tower are generally divided into crown, upper and root. The crown serves primarily as a launching point for patrols and as a major defensive point. The upper level is the brightest, near the surface and light blue-violet waters. The best homes and formal offices are located here. The root of the coral tower is more sparsely inhabited to maintain the tower's integrity. While the surface light still penetrates to the bottom, it is a tenebrous ruddy illumination. Slaves and green pisceans are common here, in Spartan work rooms. A few powerful magical items help the pisceans coordinate their monitoring of the oceans.

Besides the plenipotentiary, Lucoopokul is home to eight red pisceans, 17 black pisceans (five of whom are consuls), 500 green pisceans, 80 kuo-toa, 100 locathah and 1,000 merfolk slaves. The kuo-toa are accepted as members of the pisceans — though the lowest of the low, certainly. The locathah are rebellious slaves and are watched carefully.

Keekateelil, Root of the Crest

Located a mere hundred miles east of the Toe Islands, Keekateelil sits atop a mountainous ridge that descends like steps into the deep abyss. It is the capital of the Cresting Ranges region. While tribute is a vital part of the economy here, gore farming and other deep-water pursuits are also important.

Keekateelil is a powerful trade city, the port between the scattered cities to the east and those along the shallows of Ghelspad. It sprawls along the high plateau, which is only 400 feet deep, and down into fissures going as deep as 2,000 feet. This plateau is fairly small, perhaps a thousand feet by eight hundred. Sunlight is ruddy and dim at this level, a violet haze occluding anything more than 300 feet distant.

The main city is built upon ruins of an ancient merfolk city. Bluish-black basalt plazas are ringed with sweeping gold and platinum arches, fine spires and ramps extending like feathers into the upper waters. Platforms, impossibly delicate, cover the bright main city.

The Plenipotentiary

Makokriltopok occasionally goes on patrols to see the status of his dominion. His five consuls (standard black pisceans) are unhappy with this, but several consider what might happen if something were to “accidentally” happen to the plenipotentiary.

Makokriltopok, Plenipotentiary of Surface Customs for the White Flow region, male black piscean: CR 13; SZ Large humanoid (aquatic); HD 18d8+54; hp 135; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., Swim 60 ft.; AC 24 (+1 Dex, -1 size, +6 natural, +4 bracers, +2 ring, +2 torc); Atk +16/+11 melee (1d8+4, 2 claws, 1d8+2 bite), +18/+13/+8 melee (1d8+5, +1 harpoon), ranged +15 (1d8+5, +1 harpoon); Face/Reach 5 ft./10 ft.; SA spells; SQ amphibious, cold resistance 10, damage reduction 6/—, fast healing 2, voice of the sea; AL lawful evil; SV Fort +13, Ref +16, Will +14; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 19, Cha 18

Skills: Appraise +8, Bluff +12, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +19, Handle Animal +11, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (sea) +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +2, Search +2, Sense Motive +18, Spellcraft +15, Spot +5, Survival +3.

Feats: Combat Casting, Craft Rod, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Negotiator, Point Blank Shot, Spell Penetration, Weapon Focus (harpoon).

Languages: Aquan, Kraken, Ledean, Piscean.

Special Attacks: Spells (casts as an 18th-level druid and 9th-level sorcerer).

Special Qualities: Amphibious (can breath air for 1 hour per point of Constitution before beginning to drown), cold resistance 10, damage reduction 6/— (only against damage from bludgeoning weapons or nonlethal damage), fast healing 2, voice of the sea (able to communicate with all aquatic creatures at will).

Possessions: bracers of armor +4, cloak of resistance +4, ring of protection +2, ring of sustenance, rod of absorption, torc of natural armor +2, +1 distance harpoon, 2,000 gp worth of fine artworks, gold-encrusted wall hangings and two elegant evergreen lanterns worth 500 gp each (due to the gold, platinum and overall craftsmanship).

Spells Prepared (6/6/6/6/6/4/4/3/3/2): 0-lvl — chill/warmth (RR), detect magic (x3), light (x2); 1st — calm animals, charm animal, produce flame, speak with animals (x3); 2nd — barkskin, flaming sphere, lesser restoration, owl's wisdom, swift water (RR), warp wood; 3rd — clear sight (see Appendix), contagion, dominate animal, pressure sphere (x2) (RR), protection from energy; 4th — freedom of movement (x2), omniscience (RR2), repel vermin, scrying, touch of the eel (RR); 5th — commune with nature, death ward (x2), insect plague, ship snare (RR), stonewall; 6th — dark water (RR), greater dispel magic, mass bull's strength, water mastery (see Appendix); 7th — changestaff, creeping doom (creates aquatic centipedes), true seeing; 8th — finger of death, mass cure serious wounds, word of recall; 9th — elemental swarm, foresight.

Spells Known (cast 6/7/7/7/5): 0-lvl — arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, enumerate, light, mage hand, message, read magic; 1st — buoyancy net (RR), charm person, expeditious retreat, magic missile, true strike; 2nd — alter self, detect thoughts, see invisibility, whispering wind; 3rd — arcane sight, clairaudience/clairvoyance, nondetection; 4th — greater invisibility, scrying.

Magical wards keep earthquakes and inclement weather from damaging this part of the city. The plenipotentiary Macoccreema lives in the main palace, with three consuls occupying adjoining buildings.

The upper city is home to the plenipotentiary, seven red pisceans, 14 black pisceans (including three of his consuls) and 300 green pisceans. A host of 200 merfolk serve as house slaves, and 40 kuo-toa serve as advisors to the black pisceans. The merfolk here are relatively well treated, used for basic labor and a few artisans prized for their work at decorating the city.

The deep city, that sprawling out and down from the narrow plateau, is a layered tangle of caves and structures biologically cemented into crevasses. Workshops, gore collection tanks, slave quarters and homes cluster like seaweed draped over the undersea mountain.

As the depth increases, light becomes increasingly faint. Green and blue lights like glowing foliage

web over the homes, tracing out the patterns of common areas and lit thoroughways to other neighborhoods. This light, dampening to a ruddy haze in the distance, lends a beautiful, ethereal quality to the lower city.

While dangerous, it is actually fairly easy to hide in the lower city — assuming one can avoid patrols in the upper waters. Many cracks and bare areas abound. Assuming one can blend reasonably with the surroundings, patrols are unlikely to spot an unmoving feature below. The upper city, of course, is much more secure.

The deep city is home to eight red pisceans, 15 black pisceans (including four consuls, one sent to the deep city for displeasing the plenipotentiary) and 350 green pisceans. A thousand merfolk serve as slaves, most farming fish and some on gore collection teams. Another 50 kuo-toa live a modest existence here, given considerable latitude for non-pisceans. One hundred and twenty locathah serve grudgingly. They were recently reverted to slave status

Consuls

The consuls are Crema, Shesseooci, Elshoobod, Taccooma and Washacood. Shesseooci and Elshoobod are actively working against Makokriltopok, seeking his position. The other three are content to see how these attempts play out before acting one way or another.

Consul of Lucoopokul, male black piscoan: CR 9; SZ Large humanoid (aquatic); HD 13d8+39; hp 98; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., Swim 60 ft.; AC 19 (+1 Dex, -1 size, +6 natural, +2 bracers, +1 ring); Atk +13/+8 melee (1d8+4, 2 claws, 1d8+2, bite), +15/+10 melee (1d8+5, +1 harpoon), +12 ranged (1d8+5, +1 harpoon); Face/Reach 5 ft./10 ft.; SA spells; SQ amphibious, cold resistance 10, damage reduction 6/—, fast healing 2, voice of the sea; AL lawful evil; SV Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +7; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 16

Skills: Appraise +3, Bluff +2, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +7, Handle Animal +11, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (sea) +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +2, Search +2, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +10, Spot +5, Survival +3.

Feats: Combat Casting, Craft Rod, Empower Spell, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (harpoon).

Languages: Aquan, kraken, Ledean, piscoan.

Special Attacks: Spells (cast spells as 13th-level druid and 6th-level sorcerer).

Special Qualities: Amphibious, cold resistance 10, damage reduction 6/—, fast healing 2, voice of the sea.

Possessions: bracers of armor +2, +1 harpoon, ring of protection +2.

Spells Prepared (6/6/6/5/4/3/2/1): 0-lvl — chill/warmth (RR), detect magic (x3), light (x2); 1st — calm animals, charm animal, produce flame, speak with animals (x3); 2nd — barkskin, flaming sphere, lesser restoration, owl's wisdom, swift water (RR), warp wood; 3rd — clear sight (see Appendix), contagion, dominate animal, pressure sphere (RR), protection from energy; 4th — freedom of movement, omniscience (RR2), scrying, touch of the eel (RR); 5th — commune with nature, death ward, ship snare (RR), stonkskin; 6th — greater dispel magic, water mastery (see Appendix); 7th — true seeing.

Spells Known (cast 6/7/6/4): 0-lvl — arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, enumerate, light, message, read magic; 1st — buoyancy net (RR), expeditious retreat, magic missile, true strike; 2nd — alter self, see invisibility; 3rd — arcane sight.

Nobles, male black piscoan: CR 7; SZ Large humanoid (aquatic); HD 10d8+30; hp 75; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., Swim 60 ft.; AC 18 (+1 Dex, -1 size, +6 natural, +2 bracers); Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8+4, 2 claws, 1d8+2, bite), +12/+7 melee (1d8+5, +1 harpoon), +9 ranged (1d8+5, +1 harpoon); Face/Reach 5 ft./10 ft.; SA spells; SQ amphibious, cold resistance 10, damage reduction 6/—, fast healing 2, voice of the sea; AL lawful evil; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 16

Skills: Appraise +3, Bluff +2, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +7, Handle Animal +11, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (sea) +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +2, Search +2, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +10, Spot +5, Survival +3.

Feats: Combat Casting, Craft Rod, Empower Spell, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (harpoon).

Languages: Aquan, Kraken, Ledean, Piscoan.

Possessions: bracers of armor +2, +1 harpoon.

Special Attacks: Spells (cast spells as 10th-level druid and 5th-level sorcerer).

Special Qualities: Amphibious, cold resistance 10, damage reduction 6/—, fast healing 2, voice of the sea.

Spells Prepared (6/5/5/4/3/2): 0-lvl — chill/warmth (RR), detect magic (x3), light (x2); 1st — calm animals, charm animal, produce flame, speak with animals (x2); 2nd — barkskin, flaming sphere, lesser restoration, swift water (RR), warp wood; 3rd — clear sight (see Appendix), dominate animal, pressure sphere (RR), protection from energy; 4th — freedom of movement, omniscience (RR2), touch of the eel (RR); 5th — ship snare (RR), stonkskin.

Spells Known (cast 6/7/5): 0-lvl — arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, light, message, read magic; 1st — buoyancy net (RR), expeditious retreat, magic missile, true strike; 2nd — alter self, see invisibility.

after an attempted uprising (and the slaughter of one third of their number).

Uco Loopul

This small community rings a seamount located about a thousand miles east of Delis. The ocean floor is at a depth of 4,000 feet, from which the mount rises steadily to within 1,000 feet of the surface. Fish and seaweed fill the waters above as cold currents rise from the depth and circulate up toward the lit regions above.

Uco Loopul serves as a stop for patrols and information passing through. Occasionally large forces camp around the seamount on their way to or from various forays into blood kraken territory, located a thousand miles further east.

The community is divided between upper and lower districts. The upper district consists of a number of homes arranged in loose stars and spirals along the upper seamount. These house slaves and farmers who catch food in the fertile waters above. The lower district is more military, arranged in an eastern encampment and a western encampment a few hundred feet below the upper district.

All told, Uco Loopul has three red pisceans, four black pisceans (including a consul who is attempting a very long-term political strategy in this isolated post) and 200 green pisceans. Three hundred merfolk slaves serve here. Some of the merfolk are victims of grotesque experiments performed by the black pisceans. The

Akatepma

This green piscean has garnered great power in Uco Loopul. While the black pisceans rule the area, they are often occupied with private pursuits or experiments. Akatepma has become a brilliant war leader and, while deferential, has his own schemes and plans. He has been taking careful doses of Kadum's blood, hoping to become a black piscean and join the nobility. He is first to volunteer for collection duties, so he can covertly gather some material for himself. If he is discovered doing this his life is forfeit.

Akatepma, Collector General, male green piscean, Ftr 7: CR 9; SZ Large humanoid (aquatic); HD (5d8+10) + (7d10+14); hp 85; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., Swim 60 ft.; AC 20 (+1 Dex, -1 size, +5 hide armor, +3 natural, +1 amulet, +1 ring); Atk +15/+10 melee (1d6+5, 2 claws, 1d6+2 bite), +17/+12 melee (1d8+8, +1 harpoon), +12 ranged (1d8+8, +1 harpoon); Face/Reach 5 ft./10 ft; SA envenomed weapon; SQ amphibious, cold resistance 5, damage reduction 5/—, voice of the sea; AL ; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10

Skills: Appraise +1, Bluff +7, Diplomacy +4, Handle Animal +11, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (sea) +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +2, Search +2, Sense Motive +3, Spot +3, Survival +3.

Feats: Diehard, Dodge, Endurance, Improved Critical (harpoon), Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (harpoon), Weapon Specialization (harpoon).

Languages: Aquan, Piscean.

Special Attacks: Envenomed weapon (first time a victim is hit by the harpoon he must attempt a DC 14 Fort save or be paralyzed for 1d6 rounds. When this ends, he must attempt another DC 14 Fort save or be paralyzed an additional 2d6 minutes).

Special Qualities: Amphibious, cold resistance 5, damage reduction 5/— (only applies to bludgeoning weapons and nonlethal damage), voice of the sea (can communicate with all aquatic creatures at will).

Possessions: amulet of natural armor +1, cloak of resistance +1, +1 harpoon, +2 hide armor, ring of protection +1, 10 100 gp opals.

rest of the merfolk are comparatively well treated, asked to do little but fish.

Arxandoopul, Lip of the Black Well

While pisceans can survive in the cold, black depths of the abyssal floor, the lack of any light and the bland, empty expanse are not something they find particularly enjoyable.

Sustenance is hard to find, requiring long hunts and scavenging. Deep communities leave out massive traps with rotting carcasses. Hag-

fish and other scavengers are attracted and then eaten. This is not a pleasant meal and is usually reserved for the slaves and the least of the pisceans.

Still, the deep gore trenches have vital resources. There, the thick, viscous essence of Kadum's blood in one of its purest forms can be found. While the pisceans would prefer to use blood directly from the titan, they have yet to reclaim Kadum.

Other mysterious phenomena are also in the deeps. Arxandoopul is located near one of them, a vast pool a mile across that swirls along the ocean floor. It is a gateway of sorts, exuding necromantic and elemental energies.

The black well exerts some force to prevent most from entering, requiring a DC 25 Str check to burst through. None has returned, and as far as the nearby pisceans can determine, the problem is that the well sends anyone entering to several locations — in several pieces.

Incorporeal undead and elementals sometimes drift out from the well, a process the pisceans study with interest.

One favorable aspect of the black well is that Kadum's blood tends to be pushed and concentrated along its edge, forming a thin stream of gore. This is significantly safer to harvest than the deep gore trenches, though of rather lower purity.

Arxandoopul is a sprawling series of buildings constructed primarily from transforming the silty mud along the ocean floor into stone. These buildings are built wide and low, with deep "keels." These keels are necessary as the ocean floor is soft, and the buildings essentially float in the mud. Occasionally it is necessary to turn buildings this way or that, as the slow movement of sediments cause them to drift.

The central building doesn't sit on the ocean floor at all but floats one hundred feet off of it, anchored by a number of immovable rods. This basalt building is five-sided, with a base approximately 40 feet by 40 feet and a height of 60 feet. The walls angle inward slightly and are lined with openings to the many rooms within.

Occasionally the five consuls of Arxandoopul will move the Well Tower, as the central building is known, to a more favorable position. Arxandoopul is home to four red pisceans, 10 black pisceans (including the five consuls) and 300 green pisceans. Five hundred merfolk serve to gather gore and food.

Table 2–4: Piscean City (CR 9)

This chart can be used in and immediately around most piscean cities.

Encounter Chance: 10% per hour; 12% per hour at night (60% per six hours; 72% per six hours at night)

d% Day	d% Night	Encounter	# Encountered	CR	At EL	Source
01–04	01–04	Hag, brine	See below	9	9	CCRev
05–08	05–06	Kuo-toa	See below	3	8	MM
09–23	07–21	Locathah	See below	1	9	MM
24–30	22–26	Merfolk	See below	1/2	11	CC2/MM
31–40	27–38	Octopus, giant*	1	9	9	MM
41–45	39–43	Piscean	war band	—	15	CC2
46–54	44–54	Piscean, black	1	7	7	CC2
55–61	55–61	Piscean, black	2	7	9	CC2
62–75	62–73	Piscean, green	1d6+6	2	9	CC2
76–79	74–77	Piscean, red	1	12	12	CC2
80–81	78–79	Shark, huge*	1	5	5	MM
82–85	80–83	Shark, large*	1d4+1	3	5	MM
86–90	84–88	Shark, medium*	2d4	2	6	MM
91–96	89–94	Squid*	1d6+5	2	7	MM
97–00	95–00	Squid, giant*	1	10	10	MM

Blood Sea mutant:* These creatures have the Blood Sea mutant template (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie, Appendix).

Brine hag and her pets: The brine hag (*female brine hag*, Sor4) has a school (1d4+1) of Blood Sea mutant huge sharks accompanying her.

Kuo-toa patrol: The kuo-toa serve the pisceans, so will alert their masters if trouble unfolds. A patrol consists of 1d3+1 kuo-toa and one 3rd-level lash (druid). All are blood-tainted.

Locathah patrol: The locathah serve the pisceans grudgingly and will alert their masters in case of trouble. A patrol consists of 1d10+10 locathah, two 3rd-level sergeants (fighters) and a leader, a 3rd–6th-level barbarian. All are blood-tainted.

Merfolk work gang: Merfolk are kept under careful control by the pisceans. They obey the pisceans without question. A work gang consists of 1d10+10 blood tainted merfolk, two green pisceans, and a green piscean leader of 1st–4th level.

The Abyss Darkling Plains

Fifteen days. I think it's been fifteen days. Dear Madriel, I pray and beseech that I see your rays once more!

Darkness, stretching into infinite distances. We drift over powdered snow — that's what I wrote a week ago. Powdered snow. Innocent, pure — but it is nothing but shit and decay, vast unending acres upon acres unto the billions. Slime and filth in every direction, marked only by the occasional furtive movement of some twisted horror seeking another body to worm through.

I fear we shall go quite mad. When I think of the miles — MILES — of sea above, pressing down. And what to see? Nothing. The silence is deafening. Dark and quiet eat at me.

I put on a brave face. The others talk quietly in this titan's sepulcher. Yes, that's what this place is fit for. Endless dark above, a white winding sheet below.

I almost wish the pisceans would come again.

— Feren the Seascryer's Journal #24, from the Mithril Archives

Even after the water absorbs all trace of light, the slopes of continents descend steadily downward. Eventually they end, and the rock drops rapidly. Along these edges volcanoes are born, marking out angry glowing lines beyond which are the utter cold and complete black of the abyssal plain.

The rock here is older than the gods, still marked with the places where Kadum pulled up the lands. These places have never seen light and never known warmth.

A steady soft rain falls — debris from the lit surface infinite realms above. Occasionally a corpse drifts down, perhaps a whale torn by a squid's embrace. It hits the floor with a billowing of mud before settling. Then the stillness is broken again.

While lacking the profusion of life of the upper ocean, a huge number of scavengers of dizzying variety inhabit the ocean floor. Ghostly crabs, sharks and bizarre squid can detect carrion at immense distances. Within hours, a

body on the abyssal plain will be covered in slow-moving forms.

These plains are crossed in places by flowing water — the massive gyres that form rivers within the ocean and stretch across all of the Scarred Lands. The current is not necessarily all that strong, but it is steady.

In the Blood Sea the plain has become something even stranger still. The convulsive throes of Kadum's torment caused massive spurts of blood to fall like meteors or to spear through the ocean. While much of this blood has dissipated, its overall shape still lies along the ocean floor, tracing out patterns of gore.

Scavengers near these splashes are driven to uncharacteristic frenzy. Strange formations like coral have grown around some of these pools (treat as the Hungry Reefs, though they are not coral). Once rare, they now trace out the splashes of Kadum's blood.

Pisceans study these coralline structures, hoping for some insight into Kadum. These red constructions also help track down new pockets of blood often unnoticeable to conventional detection. Finding pockets in the open plain is usually preferable than sending explorers into the gore trenches.

Other mysteries exist. Ancient stone ruins dot the deep plains. While the blood kraken have made claims, none of the sentient races of the oceans knows who built these ruins. Strange treasures are among these places, and many pisceans have tried their hand at piercing their enigma. Most have to be put down by their fellows like crazed beasts after they try.

Animals

Most of the animals of the abyssal plains are scavengers. Sharks, crabs, oddly shaped fish and squid drift along the vast dark. Each waits for the scent of a carcass. Giant squid descend from the waters above, requiring cool waters to survive. Whales also visit periodically from the upper waters — often to feed on giant squid.

Hot mineral-rich water escapes along volcanic ridges. In these areas grow strange life forms. Tubeworms and clams live on the venting water, supporting colonies of crabs and fish.

Monsters

While creatures of the deep smell and hear over massive distances, the floor of the ocean is much like a desert and encounters are rare. Most monsters of the abyss are enhanced forms of common sea creatures, such as sharks and squid. Blood-maddened water elementals glide through the waters, mindlessly attacking anything they happen across. Earth elementals

trudge along the bottom of the ocean, imprisoned by miles of ocean.

More unique creatures of the depths exist — Kadum's leviathan rests at the sea bottom between its long journeys, and when the waters stir vast powers are roused from the gore trenches.

Humanoids

Pisceans and blood kraken alike avoid the deep abyss. Patrols are sent out to keep a watch for the other forces and occasional expeditions. Pisceans send teams out to find concentrations of Kadum's blood to feed the needs of the black pisceans. Some of the animals here serve either the kraken or pisceans and will report on any unusual characters found.

Hazards

Ocean Vent (Hazard; CR 3): In the middle of the Blood Sea are long ridges, scenes of intense volcanic activity. Hot water pours upward, often forming strange chimneylike mineral deposits. The water above these vents is fast-moving (as windstorm) and abysmally hot. The affected range is 1d20 feet wide and 1d6x10 feet high. Above the vent water steps down in “wind” and heat severity by one per multiple of height. In addition, the water is an intense inhalant poison, requiring a DC 17 Fortitude saving throw to avoid taking 1d6 Con damage immediately, with nausea as a secondary effect. This poison applies to characters using *water breathing*.

Water Column (Hazard; CR 6): Near several ancient sites are series of buried stones. Whether these are traps or something else entirely is unclear. When a being with Int above 3 passes within a column of 20 feet radius and 200 feet height above the stone it activates. A DC 20 Spot check can pick out the conical depression in the mud above the stone.

When activated the stone creates a zone of *reverse gravity*. The effect is that of an immediate hurricane-force storm. The “storm” extends a quarter mile in radius and a mile upward. Along the floor the flow is toward the center, and above the flow is upward. It lasts 20 rounds.

Spectral Plant (Hazard; CR 1–9, based on size): One of the mysteries of the abyssal depths is several large fields of spectral plants (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**). They stretch like kelp forests. For every 30 feet traveled within a spectral plant bed a Reflex saving throw is required to avoid hitting one (DC 10 if the character can see invisible, 17 otherwise, adjusted by steps of 4 for the character's size class). Rising to escape the plants

Table 2–5: Abyssal Plains (CR 9)

Encounter Chance: 1% per hour; 1% per hour at night (6% per six hours; 6% per six hours at night)

d% Day	d% Night	Encounter	# Encountered	CR	At EL	Source
01–09	01–10	Blood kraken	1	9	9	CCRev
10–19	11–19	Dire shark	1	9	9	MM
20–21	20–21	Dire shark	1d4+1	9	12	MM
22–23	22–23	Dire shark**	1d4+2	10	14	MM
24	24	Earth elemental, elder**	1	12	12	MM
25	25	Earth elemental, greater**	1	10	10	MM
26	26	Earth elemental, huge**	1	8	8	MM
27–28	27–28	Earth elemental, large**	1	6	6	MM
29–33	29–33	Flayed giant	1d4+1	6	9	CC2
34–39	34–39	Gibbering moulder	1	5	5	MM
40–43	40–43	Hag, brine	See below	9	9	CCRev
44	44	Hag, sea covey	4	12		MM
45	45	Kadum’s leviathan	1	15		CC2
46–49	46–48	Kuo-toa	See below	3	8	MM
50–51	49–50	Locathah	See below	1	9	MM
52–53	51	Merfolk	See below	1/2	11	MM
54–55	52–53	Piscean	raiding party	—	11	CC2
56	54	Piscean	war band	15		CC2
57	55	Piscean, black	1	7	7	CC2
58–60	56–57	Piscean, green	1d4+1	2	5	CC2
61–70	58–67	Piscean, green	1d6+6	2	9	CC2
71	68	Piscean, red	1	12	12	CC2
72	69	Piscean, red	2	12	14	CC2
73–82	70–79	Shark, large*	1d4+1	3	9	MM
83–85	80–83	Squid, giant*	1	10	10	MM
86	84	Water elemental, elder**	1	12	12	MM
87	85	Water elemental, greater**	1	10	10	MM
88–89	86–87	Water elemental, huge**	1	8	8	MM
90–92	88–90	Water elemental, large**	1	6	6	MM
93–96	91–95	Whale, baleen*	1	6	6	MM
97–00	96–00	Whale, cachalot*	1	7	7	MM

Blood Sea mutant:* These creatures have the Blood Sea mutant template (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie, Appendix).

***Blood-tainted:* These creatures have the blood tainted template (see Appendix).

Brine hag and her pets: The brine hag (*female brine hag, Sor4*) has a school (1d4+1) of Blood Sea mutant huge sharks accompanying her.

Kuo-toa patrol: The kuo-toa serve the pisceans, so will alert their masters if trouble unfolds. A patrol consists of 1d3+1 kuo-toa and one 3rd-level lash (druid). All are blood-tainted.

Locathah patrol: The locathah serve the pisceans grudgingly and will alert their masters in case of trouble. A patrol consists of 1d10+10 locathah, two 3rd-level sergeants (fighters) and a leader, a 3rd–6th-level barbarian. All are blood-tainted.

Merfolk work gang: Merfolk are kept under careful control by the pisceans. Those allowed outside are demoralized and will obey the pisceans without question. In the abyssal plain, this group is likely going to or returning from an expedition to gather concentrated blood. (Roll 1d8: 1–5, going to a trench; 6–7, coming back from a trench; 8, other) A work gang consists of 1d10+10 blood tainted merfolk, two green pisceans, and a green piscean leader of 1st–4th level.

incurs an additional check. DC is +4 per size class after Small.

Once identified it shouldn’t be terribly difficult to remain above the spectral plants. They tend to grow around ancient sites at a thickness of 1d6 x 100 feet, however. Why they are found there and how they formed is a mystery pisceans are quite keen on discovering.

Gore Trenches

While much of the deep abyss is smooth and rather featureless, important exceptions exist. Along the middle of many of the great oceans are ridges, cut by huge transverse chasms. Other rents in the ocean bottom are elsewhere, and these consist of the very deepest reaches of the Scarred Land.

The most notable of these trenches are the flat-bottom rents. These are specifically the trails Kadum dug from the bottom of the sea floor to create the lands above. The rents are distinct from the narrow valleylike cracks and trenches elsewhere. Often hot spouts of magma burst from the thinner portions of the rents, and seamounts have formed around several of them.

In many of these deep places, Kadum's blood has settled, forming gore trenches. Warmed by magma, pooling far from the sun and sight of divine powers, it has festered. But as throughout the Scarred Lands, life thrives even here.

During a blood surge or blood monsoons a good chance exists that currents of pure blood will escape the gore trenches. Some pisceans have speculated that the gore trenches are somehow causing these storms, but the reality is fairly simple — currents above are stirring up the trenches.

Black pisceans send teams to gather some of the gore along the edges of the trenches. It is too dangerous for them to go personally. Beside the danger of being attacked by inhabitants of the trenches, pisceans run the danger of absorbing too much blood and becoming red pisceans.

Animals

Few natural animals are left in the blood-rich trenches. Nearly all are Blood Sea mutants, and the living creatures that are not mutants are blood-tainted. More terrifying are animals infected with the gore — pure Kadum's blood, incubated in the dark and cold.

Giant gore squid are regarded with fear and dread even by the blood kraken, who cannot control them. Pisceans and kraken alike have

heard tales and rumors of these vast creatures taking on Kadum's leviathan — and winning.

Monsters

The gore trenches have spawned creatures horrific even by the standards of the Blood Sea. Unknown to most of the surface world is the population of gore black dragons — feral dragons that terrorize even the largest of the trench residents.

Hazards

Some of the most terrifying hazards near the gore trenches are blood surges and blood monsoons. While the wash of blood is dangerous, the much more significant problem is the large gore creatures drawn out by the storms. These storms also increase the risk of being tainted by the gore.

Gore Fog: Visibility is 1d10 x 5 feet due to billowing masses of blood. This is treated as normal fog, and spells that will enable vision through fog apply just as well.

Gore Taint (Hazard; CR 16): Anyone within a gore trench or within 400 feet during a storm is afflicted with blood ingestion once per hour. A character who is already blood-tainted or a Blood Sea mutant must make a DC 15 Fortitude saving throw to avoid becoming a gore creature. Spell resistance applies, but the effective caster level of the gore is 16. The taint has SR 16 against spells seeking to affect it.

Congeaed Blood (Hazard; CR 10): The gore trenches have thick pools of blood so concentrated that they are almost solid. Contact with this blood requires a blood fever DC 20 Fortitude check. Luckily, this blood is fairly easy to spot — at least assuming visibility is good. The blood has an effective SR of 20.



Table 2–6: Gore Trenches (CR15)

Encounter Chance: 4% per hour; 4% per hour at night (24% per six hours; 24% per six hours at night)

d% Day	d% Night	Encounter	# Encountered	CR	At EL	Source
01–03	01–03	Black dragon, adult*	1	13	13	MM
04	04	Black dragon, ancient*	1	21	21	MM
05–07	05–06	Black dragon, mature adult*	1	16	16	MM
08	07	Black dragon, old*	1	18	18	MM
09	08	Black dragon, very old*	1	20	20	MM
10–17	09–17	Black dragon, young adult*	1d4+1	11	15	MM
18–19	18–20	Blood kraken*	1	11	11	CCR _{Rev}
20–22	21–22	Dire shark**	1	12	12	MM
23–37	23–38	Dire shark**	1d4+1	12	15	MM
38–39	39–40	Earth elemental, elder***	1	12	12	MM
40	41	Giant, storm	1	21	21	MM
41	42	Hag, brine	See below	20	20	CCR _{Rev}
42–49	43–49	Kadum's leviathan	1	15		CC2
50	50	Black pudding* (30 HD)	1	13	13	MM
51–57	51–58	Merfolk	See below	1/2	11	MM
58	59	Merfolk*	See below	3	10	MM
59–64	60–65	Monstrous crab, huge†	3d10+1	8	16	MM
65–69	66–71	Monstrous tubeworm, colossal††	2d4+1	11	16	MM
70–77	72–79	Piscean, red	1d3+1	12	15	CC2
78–80	80–82	Piscean, red	1	12	12	CC2
81–83	83–85	Piscean, red*	1	12	14	CC2
84	86	Slarecian worm (18 HD)	3d4	7	13	CC2
85–86	87	Squid, giant**	1	12	12	MM
87–97	88–97	Squid, giant** (36 HD)	1	15	15	MM
98–00	98–00	Water elemental, elder***	1	12	12	MM

**Gore lich*: These creatures have the gore lich template (see Appendix).

***Gore vampire*: These creatures have the gore vampire template (see Appendix).

****Blood-tainted*: These creatures have the blood-tainted template (see Appendix).

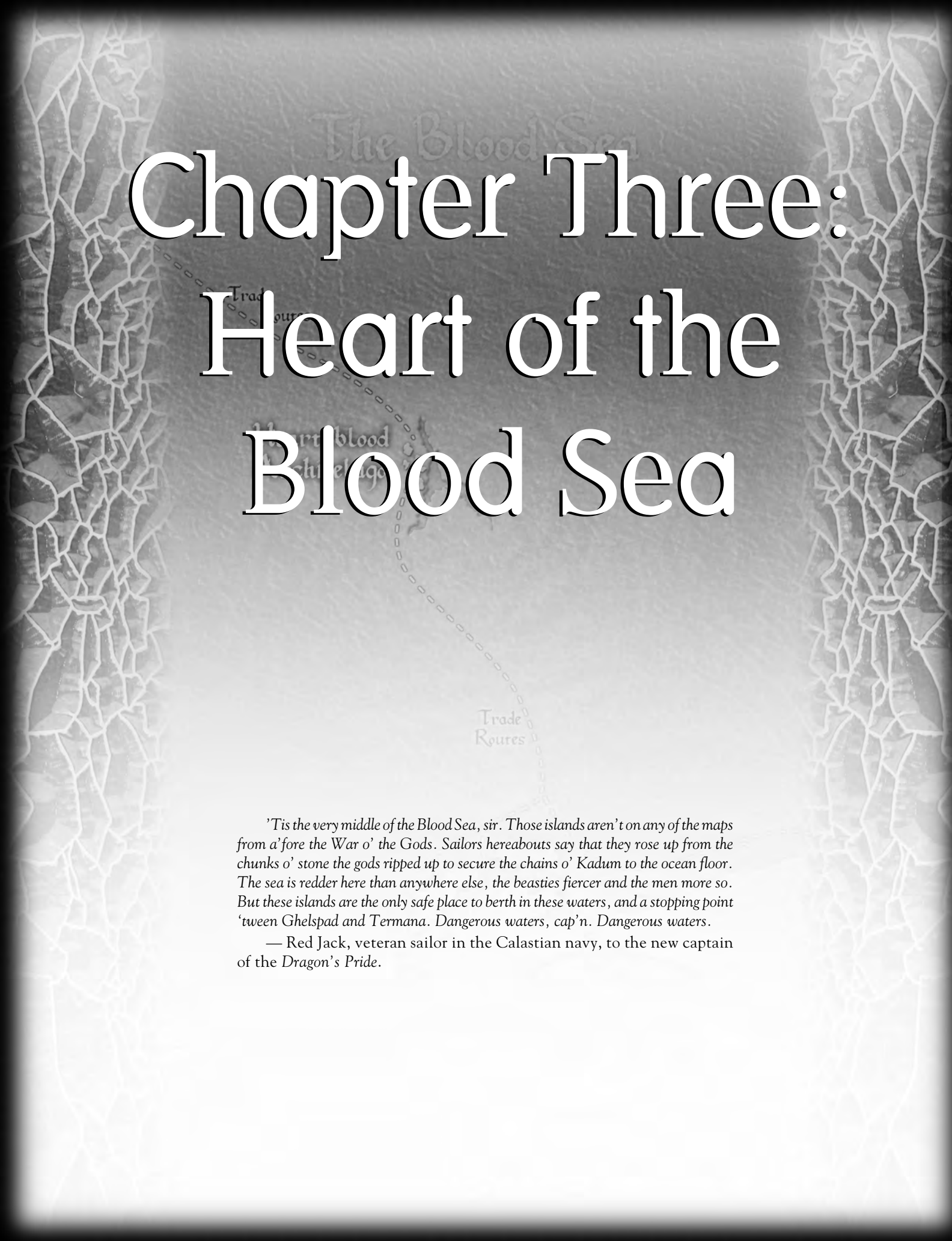
†*Monstrous crab*: Bottom crabs are normally white, but these are an almost lambent scarlet-black. Treat as a 12 HD giant praying mantis with gore vampire template.

††*Monstrous tubeworm*: Tubeworms, residents of hot vents in the ocean bottom, normally grow to a length of a foot or two. These sup on Kadum's gore and have grown larger than trees. Treat as a colossal monstrous centipede, though lacking limbs and attached to rock. They have the gore vampire template. The skeletons of whales and other creatures may be spotted nearby, victims to these worms' insatiable thirst for blood.

Brine hag: Once a merfolk maiden, Sarbuia (*female brine hag, Sor13*) is now a huge brine hag ruling in the deep trenches. She is served by a number of granddaughters (*female brine hag, Sor17*). All have the gore template. This result indicates one of the granddaughters is encountered. If one of these brine hags is defeated, Sarbuia may gather the rest and come calling. Each has an entourage of 2d6+2 gore dire sharks.

Merfolk work gang: This is a gore collection team. The lifespan of such groups is limited. The gang will have a collection sphere, a specialized *bag of holding* (can suck up or spray fluids without either touching the user). A work gang consists of 1d10+10 blood-tainted merfolk, two green pisceans, and a green piscean leader of 1st–4th level.

Storm giant: During the Divine War the somewhat pacifist storm giants wanted nothing to do with all the "commotion" going on in the lands above. They retreated underwater, further and further, until they waited out the troubles in several deep sea trenches. As it turned out, this was an exceedingly bad idea. These storm giants have 5 barbarian levels and the gore lich template. The storm giants occasionally use their abilities to *control weather* to create comfortable regions of gore; they go out foraging to find new creatures to torment.



Chapter Three: Heart of the Blood Sea

'Tis the very middle of the Blood Sea, sir. Those islands aren't on any of the maps from a'fore the War o' the Gods. Sailors hereabouts say that they rose up from the chunks o' stone the gods ripped up to secure the chains o' Kadum to the ocean floor. The sea is redder here than anywhere else, the beasties fiercer and the men more so. But these islands are the only safe place to berth in these waters, and a stopping point 'tween Ghelspad and Termana. Dangerous waters, cap'n. Dangerous waters.

— Red Jack, veteran sailor in the Calastian navy, to the new captain of the *Dragon's Pride*.

Heartsblood Archipelago

In the center of the Blood Sea, on the western side of the Deepest Trench, is a chain of islands. Most of these islands are uninhabited or otherwise not noteworthy save as the safe harbor for pirates and other scalawags. A few of the larger and more interesting islands are detailed below.

Deadmoon Isle

This small island on the southern tip of the archipelago is surrounded by dangerous reefs that only experienced captains can hope to pass (DC 25 Profession (sailor) check). Deadmoon Isle's surface is rocky with little vegetation, mostly scrub trees that desperately burrow their roots into the earth. Shaggy and belligerent wild goats roam the interior.

The island was named by its lone inhabitant, the ogre Kresdoon (*male ogre, Bbn6/Drd9, NE*), one of the older inhabitants of the Heartsblood Archipelago and a devoted child of Kadum. Unable to save his titanic patron, Kresdoon relocated to the island and spends his extended life plotting Kadum's return. As opposed to other followers of the titan, however, he does not seek to first unchain Kadum but rather to recover the dark heart that was cut from his chest. He believes that restoring the heart will raise the titan anew. To this end, Kresdoon plots against Belsameth; he has become obsessed with defeating her and is more than willing to aid anyone opposing her, regardless of motives. Kresdoon has no love for Mithril, remembering what room the mithril golem played in his sire's defeat, and began helping the Blood Sea pirates against that city's merchants. This alliance lasted only until he discovered that several of them were followers of the Crone Goddess. Several pirate ships were sunk, and now Kresdoon has a reputation as an unstable and mad ally, causing most to avoid him.

Kresdoon often sends sea birds across the Scarred Lands as messengers and envoys, hoping to coerce or incite powerful beasts and individuals against Belsameth with promises of potent magical items he crafts. It is known that he is directly responsible for killing at least one of the goddess' pages (and uses that creature's skull as a goblet).

Haven

A bastion of order in the vast Blood Sea, Haven is made up of three small islands that have been connected by enchanted rope bridges. In 122 A.V., ten years after the Blood Monsoon, a secret conference of monks from all over Ghelspad gathered on the Celestial Shelf to discuss the chaos caused by Kadum's taint, which they saw as a dire

threat to the world. A consensus was reached that an outpost should be built deep in the heart of the Blood Sea and from there the grace of rectitude would spread. Over the next four years, avoiding all contact with the various merchant houses, ships traveled back and forth from the continent to the archipelago as Haven was built. The stone-walled fortress with guarded docks serves as a safe staging ground and supply base for taming the surrounding islands and subduing the pirates.

At present, Haven is overseen by an odd pairing: Duzen, a Fist of Mithril (*male human Mnk12, LG*), and Halescornassus, an exemplar (*male human Mnk9/Exe3, LN*). They have maintained Haven's autonomy — the lawful may stay and help the cause, but it is the cause alone they bow to and no other authority. Being led by monks, Haven has an austere character about it, with few comforts. Goats and a grove of fruit trees provide food. An enchanted well provides clean water.

Many a brave soul have traveled the long path from Mithril or Hedrad seeking to make names for themselves against the pirates. At any one time a dozen or so adventurers, justicars, paladins and the like might be staying within the walls of the outpost alongside the handful of lower-level monks devoted to Duzen and Halescornassus.

The smaller two islands have very different purposes. The taller with a cliff face acts as a watchtower, while the gentle slope of the other is used for meditation purposes and is *consecrated* and ringed with *glyphs of warding* to keep the surrounding dangers at bay.

Hungry Reefs

Surrounding much of the Heartsblood Archipelago is a series of treacherous reefs. The aptly named Hungry Reefs are difficult to navigate through (DC 30 Profession (sailor) check). Most captains would choose simply to avoid the reefs, even if it meant never visiting several islands. Crafty pirates are known to come alongside ships and force them either to run the reefs or engage.

A further danger in the reefs is the number of blood zombies and trapped spirits of doomed sailors that haunt the rocks (which in spots are encrusted with blood barnacles). These undead have been known to swim out to nearby vessels and use their touch to warp portions of a ship's hull and cause leaks.

Some sailors, though, would consider Matzool the Illtrawler (*male human Drd5/Rgr3/Ilt4, NE*) the most formidable threat on the reefs. Matzool dwells in a half-sunken ship that crashed on the reef years back, but through his magic he has kept it somewhat afloat. Inside are said to be all sorts of

strange and wondrous objects that his nets have pulled from the sea. He trawls for bits of Kadum's gore but is not averse to a bit of fresh (living) catch and has been known to call monsters to sink ships (merchant and pirate) that have narrowly cleared the reefs.

The Lush Isle

The largest island in the archipelago is one of extremes, nearly sheer cliff walls along the north side contrasting with the more serene lagoon on the southern end. Thick and wild jungle chokes the interior while by the beach lies a crude town. In the center, overlooking all, is a volcano.

The island earned its name due to disaster. In the final moments of the Mountainshaker's struggles, his thrashing caused the volcano to erupt. Many of the natives who dwelt on the island (see Rikken, below) managed to flee the fiery ash, poisonous fumes and molten lava.

Nearly two decades after Ol' King Smolder's eruption, life returned to the island. The volcanic ash had nurtured thick vegetation and the spray from the Blood Sea had cultivated dangerous new plant life. When the *Quarryshark*, a Thalien vessel, blew off course and crashed against the cliffs, a few sailors survived and made it to shore. They saw the verdant growth and considered that the gods had been kind to maroon them on a lush island at least.

The Volcano

In the center of the island lies a semidormant volcano. The townsfolk of Bloodport refer to it as Ol' King Smolder, while the natives of neighboring Rikken refer to it in their tongue as *Volakashde*, which roughly translates to "the Angry Sleeper." Many of the natives travel over in their primitive boats to the Lush Isle to pay homage at the foot of the volcano. Their adepts consider it taboo for any other to step foot there and have been known to attack trespassers.

This has caused problems since the coming of Farlese (*male human Sor9/Rog3, CE*), who claims to be a Brother of Flame. Farlese claims that certain igneous rocks along the lip of the volcano possess the essence of fire and can be used as spell components that augment the casting of any fire-related magic. Farlese is known to be a coward and hires townsfolk from Bloodport and other adventurers and mercenaries to recover the



Heartsblood Archipelago



Minhar's Folley

Hungry Reefs

Widowshore

Haven

Rigger

Lush Isle

Hungry Reefs

• Bloodport

Deadmoon

Reef of the Lost



20 miles

stones for him. When the last expedition failed to return, Farlese's detractors claimed he was purposely sending people to their doom as a sacrifice to Thulkas through the volcano. As such, he has been forced to offer more and more wealth to convince people to make the attempt.

Besides zealous Rigge shamans, other dangers are around and within the volcano. A salamander wearing a cloak of glowing embers has been seen entering one of the old lava tubes. Whether this creature actually dwells inside Ol' King Smolder or was momentarily drawn from the Great Inferno is unknown.

The Cliffs

When Ol' King Smolder erupted, the explosion sent sections of the northern part of the island into the sea, leaving a wide cliff face. Climbing it would certainly be treacherous (DC 20 Climb check). Exceptionally large desert falcons (see **Creature Collection Revised**) have been known to roost along the cliff wall. Nobles from Calastia who practice falconry have been known to pay upward of a thousand gold dominions for a fine living specimen.

The Jungle

The interior of the island is a thick tropical jungle that thrives on the frequent periods of rainfall. Though some small animals live here – rats brought from ships, venomous tree frogs, assorted vermin – no large beasts prowl the jungle. That is not to say no predators exist, because exotic carnivorous plants such as the cadaver bloom and tendriculos are found here in abundance.

The Lagoon

Compared to the rest of the island, the lagoon on the south side seems almost tranquil. Still, one can never escape the effects of the Blood Sea, and the water here is always tinted a light reddish hue. Along the beach are set stakes with unlit torches. These are used as warning signals in case of an attack or danger. The lagoon is deep enough to moor shallow-bottom vessels, usually the swift

running ships many of the pirates in the region choose to use. Those with deeper keels anchor well off shore.

Minhar's Folly

Jungle covers the center of Minhar's Folly, the northernmost island in the archipelago. The sandy beaches are infested by a giant species of pale-hued crab that blends in with the sand. The massive crabs possess pincers that can cut a man in half. Many dare such creatures though to recover an exceedingly rare drug known as "folly." The explorer and alchemist Minhar first discovered the sense-enhancing effects of the pollen of a night-blooming flower he named "evening's whisper." Minhar brought back folly to his native Shelzar and the drug was wildly embraced, earning the explorer great wealth. But on his return visit to the island, Minhar discovered not all the vegetation was harmless — a gallows vine strangled him and some of his crew.

Despite its discoverer's demise, demand for folly has increased, especially with specialists in divination. Rumor has it that a gang of students has begun surreptitiously peddling the drug at Phylactric Vault.

An evening whisper blossoms only at night and is pollinated by bats. During the day it is very difficult to spot one of the plants (a DC 30 Profession (herbalist) or Survival check), but at night they may be found more readily (the DC is reduced to 20). The treated pollen is usually added to the tobacco in a hookah or water pipe, but some simply burn the powder in a brazier like incense.

Reef of the Lost

Along the southeastern edge of the Archipelago can be found the Reef of the Lost, a shorter stretch of rock and coral compared to the Hungry Reefs but far more tragic because of its history. Upon close examination, the rocks of the reef are revealed to be petrified merfolk, their bodies twisting out of the water as if in

Folly

Cost: 500 gp/dose

Craft (alchemy) DC: 25

The inhaler gains a +4 alchemical bonus to all Listen and Spot checks. Should the inhaler cast any Divination spell while under the effects of folly, the caster's effective level for the purposes of the spell's effectiveness is +2.

As with most drugs, folly has bad side effects: The inhaler suffers 2 points of temporary Con damage and with the increased awareness comes overstimulation – the individual becomes jittery and nervous (treat as being *shaken*).

agony. No one is quite sure what befell these gentle folk. Some legends say that when the blood spread through the water and began to deform the merfolk, Manawe was merciful and did all she could to end their suffering by transforming half of the entire City of Pearls into this reef. Others suggest that the taint of Kadum was all that was necessary for the sad transformation. Worshippers of Manawe often make a pilgrimage out to this reef, to chase away sea creatures and illtrawlers and to leave behind handmade offerings and shed tears.

Riggen

Closest to the Lush Isle in the archipelago, Riggen is inhabited by the folk who fled the Lush Isle during the volcanic eruption. The primitive natives who dwell here call themselves the Rigge (“the folk”) and are shorter than most humans from Ghelspad, standing around 5 feet tall and weighing some 80 pounds. They have bronze-colored skin with dark hair and eyes, except for the tribal shamans, who have green eyes (and usually belong to one of the spellcasting classes, most often the adept NPC class). They wear little clothing, preferring loincloths. Both males and females decorate their wrists and ankles with bracelets made from sinew, wood, bone and coral. The Rigge warriors wield blowguns, halfspears and daggers; roughly 10% of their number are skilled rangers.

The Rigge escaped from Lush Isle using flat-bottomed boats they rowed to safety. They consider the volcano a deity and the eruption and the seas turning red like blood a sign of its terrible anger at some forgotten offense. When the *nedrig* (“not folk,” as they call anyone not of their kind) came to the sacred island, the Rigge considered them interlopers trespassing on holy land. They reasoned that if they could remove the *nedrig* then maybe their god would be appeased and the waters would turn back to blue and the fish not sicken them. Despite the shamans’ talk, Valu, the chieftain of the Rigge (*male human Ari3/Rgr6, LN*), is more interested in ensuring his people’s survival than revenge.

The initial strife between the founders of Bloodport and the Rigge was rather one-sided and lasted only five years. While the natives outnumbered the pirates, they could not overcome the steel weapons and incantations of the sea witches. A dozen Rigge died for every pirate who fell. A truce of sorts was called between the opponents, though it is not truly enforced.

Occasionally, a war party from Riggen still gets bold notions from the shamans and crosses the water to the Lush Isle at night. A few drunk pirates are invariably waylaid and slaughtered. Bloodport retaliates by killing any Rigge they meet, even if they are innocent traders. Several times, the more brutal members of the Meet of Dogs have demanded that Riggen be invaded and all the natives put to death. Cooler heads have prevailed, as Riggen’s jungles are too dangerous for those not aware of the beasts and odd plants that the natives accept as a matter of course, such as assassin vines.

In the center of Riggen is a pool sacred to the natives which only their shamans can enter. In the center of the pool is a small mound where stands a crude pillar of igneous rock. The shard, taken from the fiery volcano and seen as a part of their god, was brought here by the chief shaman of the tribe. The pillar is considered a fertility relic and responsible for the tribe’s survival. Whether it is an immense piece of that same strange rock that Farlese gathers is unknown. To date, the only ones who know of the rock are the Rigge and the few druids in the Archipelago who have learned of its existence through animal spies.

Widowshore

Before the creation of the Blood Sea, Widowshore was a small island that older maps and geographical tomes list as an often-visited point on sea voyages to restock supplies. Originally called Wellshore, the island’s many springs offered exceptionally sweet water. Gentle and enticing nymphs wandered the shorelines, a welcome distraction for weary sailors. But with Kadum’s fall and the poisoning of the surrounding waters, this is no longer a safe stop. While the springs are still there and are considered delicious enough to compete with fine wine, the sweet-natured fey have been changed into cruel blood maidens (see **Creature Collection 2: Dark Menagerie**). The island is infested with them, and any map of worth these days will have warning to avoid Widowshore, as it has been renamed.

Rumors circulate that the self-styled pirate queen Kariosa Nephantaros (see **Mithril: City of the Golem**) has discovered a way to avoid the blood maidens and has buried a vast treasure on the island taken from many a plundered vessel. If so, it may be worth the risk to explore.

Bloodport

Any sailor worth his salt (with a Profession (sailor) skill of at least 3 ranks) has heard about Bloodport. These tales range from bits of drunken debauchery that would make the courtesans of Shelzar titter to stories of pirate maps and markets where anything can be bought and sold. The town offers safety from authorities and any sailor can flee and find sanctuary, though not necessarily a better life.

Few others know about Bloodport (requires a DC 20 Gather Information check), and even then what is learned is not always accurate. Only experienced sailors can safely negotiate the islands of the Archipelago.

History

The founders of Bloodport were castaways from the *Quarryshark* from Thalien. Flotsam from the ship's wreck that washed ashore became the first crude shanties. Some thirty years later the ramshackle huts had grown into a true pirate town as more and more disreputable seamen sought a port to resupply and trade their booty. Few have bothered to chronicle the town's history, as little demand has been seen other than listening to stories over mugs of spiced rum.

Living Conditions

Bloodport is not a genteel town. After all, the majority of the folk to be found there are rogues and scoundrels. It lacks the refinements of older towns; worked stone is a rare commodity and costly on the island, so nearly everything has been built with salvaged wood and thatched with dried palm leaves. Few structures have more than a single story, and those that do are homes of the wealthiest traders and pirate captains. As few of the townsfolk have any real skill with architecture, shoddy construction is the norm, so many places are little more than shacks and lean-tos that will no doubt collapse with the next heavy storm.

Throughout this ramshackle town, unpaved dirt lanes meander, in some places no wider than a single person. No one bothers with horses (as their upkeep is too demanding, resource-wise), but a few of the wealthier merchants make do with mules or *wands of unseen servant*. No sewers exist, so people dump their nightwater and refuse out the window or door onto the sides of the streets. On warm days, a person downwind can tell he is approaching Bloodport miles before the town is in sight. The reek of fish, sewage and mildew is blended with smoke from countless cooking fires and the seemingly ubiquitous braziers burning incense and spices. Since the Lush Isle has a fair amount of rain (on average two days out of the

week), people wait for the rainfall to wash the sewage away.

Good food and safe drink are precious commodities in Bloodport, in some cases more so than gold or jewels. A few larger homes and alehouses have tiny gardens, and many folk keep pigpens (the swine are often allowed to roam loose in certain areas of town, foraging in the sewage), but otherwise the only sources of food are captured supplies from ships, foraging in the jungle of the Lush Isle and fishing the tainted waters. Whenever pirates board a vessel, they make sure to take the lion's share of the ship's food, water and liquor. After restocking their own supplies, the pirates sell or trade the remainder to merchants in Bloodport.

Far riskier is hunting for edibles in the surrounding jungle. Carnivorous plants often are found near edible roots or fruit. Fishing in the Blood Sea is the last option for most due to the danger of contracting blood sickness.

Because of the unhealthy living conditions, disease runs rampant in Bloodport. Most suffer from digestive woes caused from bad food and water, but sometimes this leads to far more serious illnesses such as filth fever and the red ache (from the DMG) as well as blood fever (see the Appendix). Bloodport has no graveyard. Burying bodies sparks further disease, and dumping them overboard is only done if at sea and far from shore; Kadum's blood may cause the deceased to rise up as undead, something the townsfolk have experienced too many times. Most of the time, the remains are burned. Wealthy men and women often return to their home continents if they want a decent burial, or sometimes are buried on one of the neighboring islands.

Perhaps the most famous of those is the famed pirate Jhagesh, who was supposedly buried on one of the other islands of the archipelago. While gold aplenty was no doubt buried with him, more of interest is the pirate's cutlass. Prowtooth, a magically *keen* weapon forged by the sea witch Hemry, supposedly allowed him to cut the lines of other ships from a distance, leaving them floundering as he approached. Many pirates seek the cutlass, hoping to inherit some of Jhagesh's success. No one knows where the grave is for sure, though maps are always floating around the bars and hovels of Bloodport, all purporting to lead the buyer to the site of his burial.

Government

Though home to many a cutthroat and port of call for some of the scurviest lot ever to ply the waters, Bloodport is not without a semblance of order. It has more rules than actual laws, and these are decided by the Meet of Dogs (coined from *seadog*, slang for veteran sailors), a body of the most noted — in some cases, feared — members of town. Normally, the

current five members of the Meet conduct themselves as petty lords, dominating everyone around them and doing little in return. They tend to care little for their fellows and at times only one of their number may be in town. When the Meet is called together, they do so in the back room of a random tavern to discuss matters of grave importance to Bloodport, the last instance being the threat of the ghost ship *Battue*, with its crew of zombies and ghouls piloted by the crypt lord Julerad (*human male, Wiz8/Cri5, CE*).

The current roster of the Meet is:

- **Captain Frist “Deadlights” Leer** (*half-orc male Ftr5/Rog4/Bsp2, CE*) is a cruel man and is content, unlike most pirate captains, to rule his crew through fear rather than earned loyalty. Most of the denizens of Bloodport do not know that Deadlights has been brewing draughts from the tainted waters to increase his prowess; some might worry he will become unstable as have so many others.

- **Captain Silas Trask** (*male human Ari3/Rog10, CN*) was once a petty land baron who grew tired of the bickering of court and sought the adventurous life of the open sea. He is one of the oldest pirate captains still alive and sailing, and is quite a sight with his braided white hair and bronzed skin from years of sun and wind. Trask provides the voice of common sense often during gatherings of the Meet and has tried to

reign in some of the more villainous factions of pirates.

- **Bebel, Mistress of Squalls** (*female human Sor7/Swt3, CN*), has fooled much of the town into thinking she is far more powerful a sea witch than she actually is through such possessions as an *orb of storms* and *horn of fog*. She lives in fear that someone will discover the truth and hungers for any magical item that can bolster the falsehood.

- **Uck-tog** (*male scrag, Adp7, NE*) is an aquatic troll and Blood Sea mutant. The Meet traditionally has a representative of the underwater denizens. Uck-tog slew the merrow originally assigned to Bloodport by Queen Ran. The cagey scrag, whose looks belie his intelligence, has been playing the forces of the pisceans against the Krew of Waves with promises of tribute while keeping the town free of further involvement. How long he can play such risky diplomatic games remains to be seen, and what his own agenda might be can only be guessed at.

- **Ness Orean** (*male half-elf, Chr6/Rog6, CN*) serves Enkili first and the town second. Orean, who has very fine, delicate features, dresses and acts like a woman, wearing expensive clothes and jewelry from looted vessels. Only newcomers dare laugh at Orean and then they suffer ill luck on their next voyage, a warning not to offend one of the Jester’s devoted.



Laws

Theft is rarely a problem in town. One of the binding notions of Bloodport is that it offers a safe site to trade (fair trade practices are, however, not enforced). Robbery is punished most severely, and newcomers to town are often surprised that it's far worse a crime to steal from a local merchant than it is to drive a knife between your mate's ribs.

Murder: If a crime of passion, then allowed to go free. If victim is of higher rank (a sailor's captain) then 50 lashes and banned from serving aboard another ship for 1 to 5 years. If victim is same rank then 10 lashes. Only a monetary penalty might be paid to next of kin for murdering a subordinate.

Rape: If someone's property, owner gives 10 lashes and demands a month of labor/service; if someone's wife or daughter, a family member can give 50 lashes and demand a union or a fee that depends on the social standing of the one violated.

Arson: For burning a vessel, the punishment is a slow death, being staked down high on the beach and letting exposure to the sun kill the criminal.

Petty Theft (under 8 gp): Thief's good hand is chopped off.

Grand Theft (8 gp or more): Death by hanging from the tree in the market square.

Economy

Many of the traders who set up shop in Bloodport were once pirates themselves who either grew too old or infirm to ply the seas or simply became rich enough to find another, less dangerous vocation. Thus, they have an instant rapport with the rogues who come to sell their plunder and often possess a set of contacts with various thieves, smugglers and ne'er-do-wells to fence nearly any item that falls into their hands. Of course, some have their specialties, whether that be art, flesh, or secrets. Some of the more infamous traders are detailed below.

Thestle's (1)

This structure lacks a sign but is large; everyone in town eventually comes to Thestle's at one time or another. Thestle (*tiefling male, Exp10/Rog3, LE*) shows some of his infernal heritage by having a tongue made of flickering flame (he's careful not to whisper in anyone's ear) and tiny red horns. Otherwise he looks like any other man, fairly nondescript but with a penchant for wearing expensive clothes. Thestle has contacts everywhere, including in the Infernal and Abyssal planes. He will agree to buy anything though can never promise the best deal. Usually, pirates trade only dangerous items with him that they'd rather not be involved with: vile and unholy items and lethal poisons that are uncovered at sea or on another island.

Thestle is quite happy in Bloodport; he makes sure to tell everyone passing through his door that his shop is the oldest, appearing soon after the first pirates arrived on Lush Isle. He dislikes dealing with honorable people (-2 reaction penalty with those of lawful good or neutral alignments and prices are 20% higher) and would probably defend the town and its inhabitants in situations of grave danger.

Mad Elias' Shack (2)

This shack looks even more dilapidated than its neighbors and gives the impression that a beggar might reside within. Some of the wood near the doorway even looks charred as if from a recent blast. On the inside, though, are tables and books and all sorts of equipment, some broken, some patched. The only personal effects are a battered sea chest and a hammock.

Inside dwells Elias (*male human Exp5/Wiz7, CN*), a frustrated arcane inventor who came to Bloodport seeking asylum after being fired/exiled/threatened with death (the story changes often) from the fifth kingdom he worked for, this last being Calastia (the death threat is true). He has tried to set up shop in town and create magical devices that would appeal to the surrounding pirates. So far he has invested an air elemental into a cloth sail (it tore loose and flew off) and a cannonlike weapon that was to shoot fireballs (it only belched forth a choking smoke and cinders), and his last was a mechanical parrot to serve as a captain's familiar (the bird was so heavy it broke the poor man's collarbone).

Elias would be more than interested in hiring brave adventurers to test one of his latest inventions or to seek out a costly ingredient (sadly, he cannot pay in anything but one of his creations).

Grisell's Medicaments & Correctives (3)

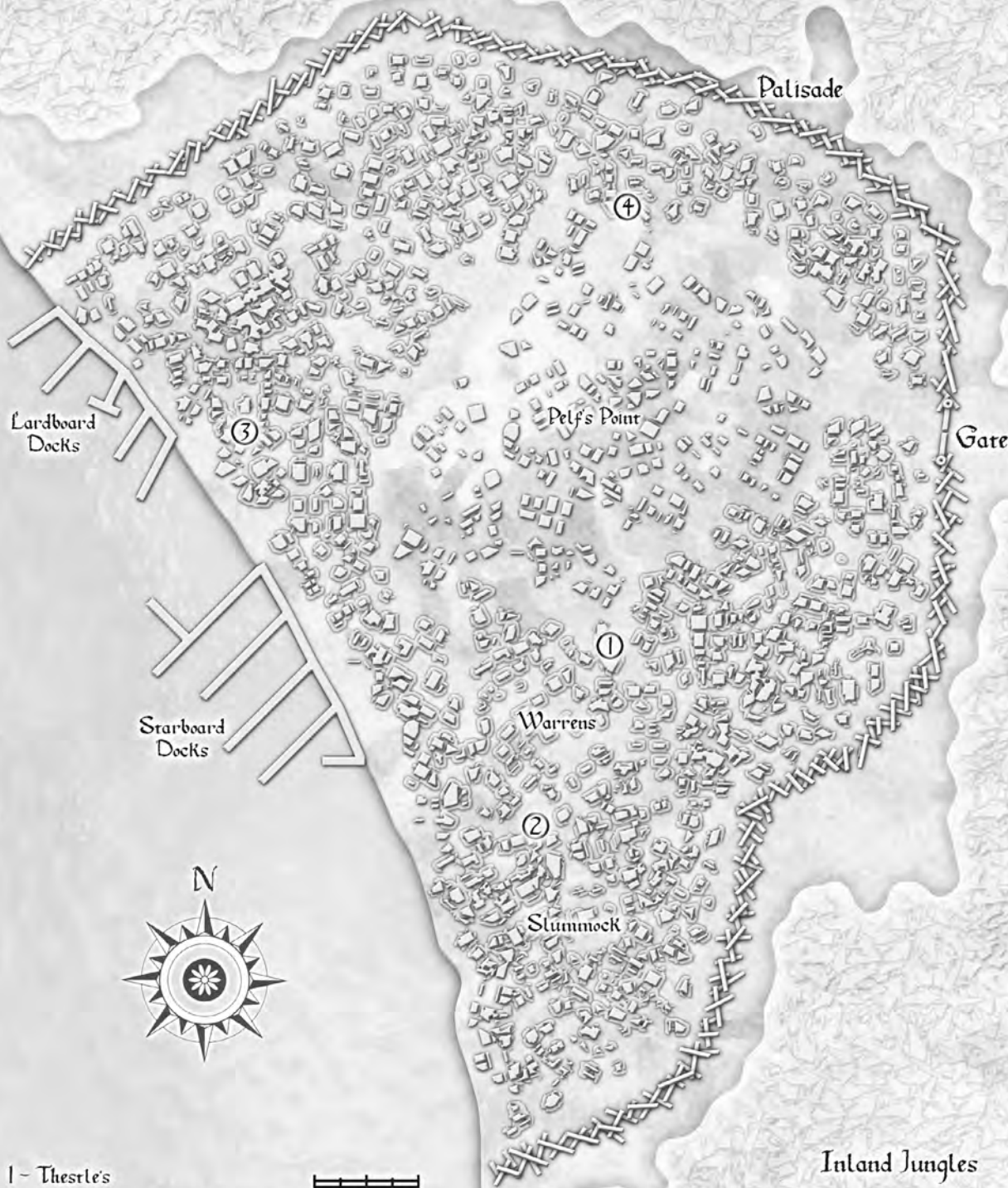
This shop does a brisk trade in healing salves, aphrodisiacs and purgatives. The owner, Grisell (*female dwarf Exp8/Rog4, NE*), is a female dwarf with a bit of a foul attitude and mouth.

Though she is a fairly skilled alchemist, Grisell's real interest is in the trade of drugs and poisons. She's willing to test the effects of any narcotic or toxin on herself, confident in her immunities to survive. She's become quite addicted to folly and can be quite manipulative to obtain more of the drug.

Grisell has underhanded dealings with many in town and abroad. She was the one who taught Captain Deadlights some knowledge of alchemy so he could pursue drinking Kadum's blood. In return, he prevents anyone else in town from selling healing (though that priest of Madriel in town may be next to disappear one evening). Grisell also has contacts within the Cult of Ancients in Shelzar, supplying them with more exotic poisons that can be found only on the islands in the Blood Sea.

Bloodport

Inland Jungles



- 1 - Thestrle's
- 2 - Mad Elias's Shack
- 3 - The Last Song
- 4 - Grisell's Medicaments & Correctives

200 feet

The Last Song (4)

The largest tavern in Bloodport boasts a most unusual feature, one that ensures that every night the house is packed with customers. In the center of the common area is a large covered cage surrounding an indoor pool of water. Residing in the pool is a blood maiden bard (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**). The water is tainted with a poison made by the natives to slow down great sea beasts — any creature carrying the taint of Kadum's blood is at risk (DC 20 Fortitude save: initial damage 1d6 Dex, secondary damage 2d6 Dex).

The bartender Bipple (*male human Com4, LE*), a stout and slack-jawed older man, bartered with the Rigge for the poison. It is rather ironic that Bipple and his staff are so small-minded that they do not see the value of the poison — he could be a hundred times wealthier if he only brought some to the theocrats in Mithril. Even Grisell has no idea how the blood maiden is kept relatively docile; being female, she has never had any interest in visiting the tavern to see its attraction.

Bipple owns a ring crafted by a visiting wizard that offers him resistance to enchantment magic. That coupled with his loss of hearing in one ear has left him practically immune to the blood maiden's song.

Not so many in town. Every evening the cage is uncovered, the blood maiden roused from her torpor by sharp pokes with a pole. She always sings, trying to coerce even just one man to step close enough. The cage is vast enough, however, that one could stretch an arm through the bars and yet just be outside the weakened creature's reach. The bartender's competitors are growing tired of Bipple having this unfair advantage (though each would certainly not pass on having his own captive blood maiden) and may soon seek to sabotage his business before they are driven to close.

Faiths

"You can forget the anchor's fall or the dagger beneath your bunk, but never forget the Three."

— Bloodport saying

Sailors soon learn that one of the few things that can comfort a person on the open sea, besides a good wind and a snort of rum, is faith in the gods. Bloodport has no temples per se, but it does have shrines. The small alleyway markers where some leave offerings to Madriel (to heal them of diseases or grave injuries) and Chardun (to ensure a good haul of slaves) are easily overlooked compared to the shrines of Bloodport's Three: Enkili, Belsameth and Manawe. Regardless of alignment, only the most foolish of pirates would venture out of Bloodport without making even a token sacrifice to each of the Three.

Captains and often their crew arriving at Bloodport will make sure their first stop is a tavern to purchase three drinks to toast each deity. Of course, a few claim

to be more devout and have several more toasts. Before any captain leaves the town to set sail on the Blood Sea once more, he will make sure to leave an offering at each of the shrines: Belsameth demands a fine dagger marked by a drop of blood; Enkili requires anything of small worth stolen; Manawe desires a bit of wood or line taken from the captain's ship.

Sometimes priests of the Three will make a special pilgrimage to Bloodport. Followers of Belsameth hope to recruit some of the more nefarious townsfolk and pirates to their cause. The clerics of Enkili desire to hear tales of great thefts and adventure to relate back home. The worshippers of Manawe meet in secret hoping to discover a way to cleanse the Blood Sea.

Senedal (*male human Rog2/Clr4, CG*), a reformed pirate who was saved from drowning by clerics of Madriel, runs a quiet shrine to the goddess in his clean little cottage just on the outskirts of town. He knows better than to preach to the denizens of Bloodport and instead is content to offer his services when people come to him. So far many of the nonpirate folk have come to regard him highly, which causes some unease and envy. He never turns away anyone, no matter what their alignment, which may one day prove his undoing. Recently, Senedal has been secretly approached by an agent of the Vigils; Senedal worries that those seeking to use the blood of Kadum for power (individuals with the prestige class Blood Sea pirate) may be worsening the problems and so has yet to decide whether or not he'll spy for Vesh.

Districts

Bloodport is laid out with the mindset of a desperate man. It hugs a lagoon tightly, allowing ships to dock. Most of the buildings are crowded near the shoreline, especially taverns and brothels. The most prosperous area overlooks the rest of town with a paranoid eye. The area nearest the inland jungle is nearly deserted with a palisade wall keeping the beasts at bay.

Larboard Docks

On the left side of the wharfs lie the Larboard Docks, a rickety affair known to be the worse section of the docks. Here the less favored or unknown pirates are forced to moor.

The seediest alehouses and bars are found in this district. Before a stout man even manages to become intoxicated from the cheap, watered-down liquor (nothing more expensive than 3 cp), he's liable to be involved in a brawl. So too, the brothels are just as inexpensive and dirty, with venereal disease rampant (patrons must make a Fort save DC 15 or suffer 1d3 Con and Cha damage)

The Larboard dockmaster, a fat and surly man named Drisk (*male human War5, NE*), regularly

takes bribes to ensure that none of the children in town sneaks aboard vessels moored here. Usually such gamin won't steal anything major (the laws for robbery by juveniles are far more merciful, being only a few lashes and locked away in a brig for a couple weeks), but they will cause mischief and will report to Drisk what items might be kept in a ship's hold, information that he will gladly sell to people in town.

Starboard Docks

These are the better docks of Bloodport and are divided into two sections: one off-limits to anyone who is not a member or guest of the Meet of Dogs (currently only the two captains own ships), and one for the more notable (sometimes infamous) pirates.

Taverns and whorehouses also line the immediate streets by these docks, though the quality is vastly better than those by the Larboard Docks. A few establishments are said to rival the drink and entertainment of major cities (no doubt because they were stolen from vessels). None of these watering holes is free of danger and intrigue, however.

Starboard Dockmaster Natasla (*female human Rog3/Rgr2, LE*), an attractive woman hailing from the plains of New Venir, takes no nonsense from anyone. Everyone in town knows she is incorruptible and dealings with her are fair if not indifferent. Natasla has on her belt a key that unlocks the manacles on a shadowcat (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**) she has well trained. Every evening she lets the beast loose and in the morning calls it back to be chained. Woe to anyone trying to climb aboard one the vessels moored here. In her off-hours, Natasla enjoys exploring the rest of the Lush Isle and would be willing to offer her services as a guide to newcomers when allowed the time.

Warrens

This area is nicknamed after a rat's nest because of the twisted tiny streets. It is nearly impossible to walk more than single file through the Warren, and one has the very real risk of someone dumping something nasty overhead. Oddly, here are found the majority of merchants who have been squeezed out of more ideal locations thanks to the many taverns and brothels in town.

The quality of goods found in the Warrens ranges wildly, from barely usable to masterwork. Often too, the shops offer information gleaned and overheard from past customers. Any rogue or character with ranks in Profession (merchant) can expect a +3 bonus to all Gather Information checks if he talks around the Warrens.

Slummock

The southern coastal area of Bloodport is referred to as the Slummock, and few permanent or study dwellings are found. These are the poorest denizens of the town, usually surviving by scavenging flotsam and jetsam that comes ashore or by performing the most menial tasks (such as scraping off barnacles, drying wood or making charcoal). No one walks twice through the twisted lanes of the Slummock unarmed. Gangs of urchins, born of trysts with the prostitutes who frequent the bawdy houses, run amuck. Smart merchants sometimes hire these children to act as spies or petty thieves to disrupt their competitors' business. In the center of the Slummock is a common well providing clean drinking water for the area. Supposedly many years back a priest of Enkili blessed the well, and no one has ever dared to tamper with its water (any attempt to do so would unify the entire town against the malefactor).

Pelf's Point

Only the wealthiest denizens of Bloodport can afford to keep a house in Pelf's Point. The buildings are not much better than the cramped conditions on the rest of the island, but they can hire the bodyguards and servants that make living safe and tolerable. The point is a hill that overlooks the rest of town. All the streets that climb the hill are broken and make walking treacherous and riding next to impossible. Posts with charms and wards dot the hillside between the houses, providing a supposed protection from the ill effects of the Blood Sea's environment (a 20% chance exists on any given day that one of these charms works and offers an individual upon Pelf's Point a +5 resistance bonus to Fortitude saves).

Both current and (living) past members of the Meet dwell in Pelf's Point. Except for costermongers, merchants are not allowed, and trespassers will often find themselves accosted by house guards as they walk past any building. This treatment can range from spoiled food being thrown on the bystander to actual battery.

Palisade

The most deserted areas of Bloodport are those nearest the inland jungle. A crude palisade wall 10 feet high separates the town from the rest of the island. The gate, though almost always locked, is laxly guarded; the threat is more from wild animals than intruders. After raids by the Rigge, however, Bloodport rouses itself enough to man the palisade. Along the interior side of the wall are wooden placards with postings ranging from wanted posters to details with what was last encountered in the island interior: both dangers as well as any fortunes to be found. The few buildings near the wall tend to be in terrible disrepair.

The Deepest Trench

Aye, captain. That is it. There, on the other side of the Archipelago, where the sea is more blood than water. The Deepest Trench. Lying place of a titan, sir. An' no place for sane men to go, let me assure ya. They say that when the sun hits those waters in the wee hours of the morning, just as it's rising, ya can see the hateful eyes of Kadum. Which probably explains the hours most folk keep here'bouts.

— Red Jack, veteran sailor in the Calastian navy, to the new captain of the *Dragon's Pride*.

In the darkest depths of the Blood Sea, the titan Kadum lies at the bottom of a trench called the Maw, his body wrapped in chains of divine make, which in turn are weighed down by an enormous mountain of a boulder. His wound bleeds eternally, giving the Blood Sea its hue and name. His anger over the events that led him to his prison burns as furiously as on the day on which he was imprisoned.

The trench itself is vast — after all, Kadum is a titan capable of crushing cities the way a man might crush anthills. At the edge of the abyss lies the palace of Queen Ran, a kraken who fed on the blood of the titan, growing in intellect and arcane strength.

If this were not reason enough to avoid Kadum's prison, rumors have it that the trench is so deep, it leads to one of many hellish planes — indeed, with so many demonic and devilish creatures about, this seems more than plausible. Add to this the inhabitants mutated into grotesque and deadly mockeries of their former selves, and one should have no reason at all ever to journey to the trench of Kadum's prison.

For some, though, these are the very reasons why one *would* journey to this area. Adventurers are a strange and perplexing lot.

Provided one has the means of journeying to the location of the titan's prison — whether by mundane means such as a boat or by more mystical means — it is important to note that the exact location may take several days to find, even for a creature of Kadum's size. The area where the Father of Monsters lies is quite large, and the waters thick with his ichor.

Even if one can find the Maw, the matter of the mutated creatures that inhabit the Blood Sea still must be confronted. Pisceans the color of blood, flayed giants still loyal to the Mountainshaker, demons and devils from the infernal planes, and creatures loyal to Queen Ran are but some of the dangers one can encounter when searching for the prison of the Titanslayer.

Finally, if one can bypass those threats, is the trench where Kadum lies imprisoned. It is a deep wound in the bottom of the sea, and the blood still clouds the waters as it flows from the titan. Journeying into the trench itself is dangerous, for this is where many predators swarm, made euphoric and enraged by the ichor of the titan. Visibility is diminished due to the darkness of the interior, which is added to the murkiness caused by the titan's blood.

Within the Maw lies the titan Kadum. A creature of incredible proportions, he lies in his prison, still bleeding from the wound inflicted on him when Belsameth plucked free his heart, and he seethes with bitter rage over his defeat. Those who lived to see the titan during the Divine War know him as a gargantuan, scaled humanoid with slight reptilian features and a muscular forked tail. His wide fanged maw is filled with razor-sharp teeth as long as a human is tall. Truly, the father of monsters is a fearsome sight to behold.

I WAS WITHIN SIGHT OF THE CITY
UL AS THE TITAN KADUM AP-
PROACHED. THE MOUNTAINSHAKER
WAS A TERRIFYING SIGHT TO SEE, HIS
FORM TOWERING OVER THE CITY AS A
CHILD MIGHT LOOM OVER HIS TOYS.
ONLY KADUM WAS NO CHILD, AND THE
CITY WAS NO TOY.

IT WAS A SYMBOL OF OUR IMPU-
DENCE, ACCORDING TO THE TITAN. I
CANNOT REMEMBER WHAT THE TI-
TAN ROARED, OR EVEN IF HE DID SAY
ANYTHING BEFORE HE CRUSHED THE
GREAT CITY INTO RUBBLE. WHAT I
CAN RECALL IS THE STARK TERROR
KADUM BROUGHT TO MY HEART AS
THE CITY FELL UNDER HIS FEET AND
CLAWS.

TO THIS DAY, I AM AFRAID WHEN
THE STORMS THUNDER OVERHEAD.
THOUGH I KNOW KADUM LIES UNDER-
NEATH THE BLOOD SEA, I TREMBLE IN
THE KNOWLEDGE THAT HE COULD ONE
DAY BE FREED.

— From the journal of Hadas Lightbringer

Kadum, however, is more than just a monster — he is a titan, and that means he is possessed of a keen mind surpassing those of mortals. Though his actions and rages seem driven by a simple animalistic rage, they are in truth expressions of a primal understanding of the world and his intentions for it. He is also possessed of the powers of creation, as is evident by progeny such as the

giants. Many of his children died during the Divine War, but none could stop the gods from ripping his beating heart from his chest, chaining him to a mountainous boulder and casting him into what is now known as the Maw.

THE SIGHT OF MY CREATOR, HUMBLLED BY THE PROGENY OF THE TITANS, STILL BRINGS ME TO TEARS. TO SEE BELSAMETH HOLDING THE STILL-BEATING HEART OF MY FATHER ... THE WORDS DO NOT DESCRIBE MY RAGE AND SADNESS.

WHEN THE MITHRIL GOLEM TOOK HOLD OF KADUM, I DID NOTHING.

WHEN THE GODS CHAINED KADUM, I DID NOTHING.

WHEN KADUM WAS HURLED INTO THE WATERS THAT IS NOW CALLED THE BLOOD SEA, I DID NOTHING.

NOW, FOR EACH WORSHIPPER OF THE GODS I KILL, I DO IT IN KADUM'S NAME. FOR EACH STRUCTURE I TEAR DOWN WITH MY BARE HANDS, I DO IT IN KADUM'S NAME. THESE AND MANY OTHER DEEDS, I DO IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER OF GIANTS.

IT IS NOT ENOUGH. IT WILL NEVER BE ENOUGH.

—A tale told by the storm giant Mansplitter

The blood of the fallen titan is also a source of legend and myth. Some say the blood will drive one mad, or, even worse, the blood will mutate the receiver into a creature worthy of the most terrifying of nightmares. Some have swum in the Blood Sea, however, and claim to have suffered no ill effects. Some have even benefited from the blood of the Mountainshaker.

The Heartseekers of Kadum

Number of Members: Widely fluctuates, but at last count, 206

Alignment: Any evil, but mostly neutral evil

Regions of Influence: Blood Basin, Blood Steppes

Primary Activities: Seek the Heart of Kadum, oppose the followers of Belsameth

Description

The Heartseekers of Kadum is a group dedicated to the restoration of the titan Kadum. Composed of druids, giants, sea creatures such as the blood kraken, and other creatures loyal to the Mountainshaker, they seek to reunite the heart to the titan.

Brought together by a group of druids living near the coast of Mithril, they have slowly gathered a great number of like-minded individuals. Heartseekers have been found as far away as Termana, though the majority of them have clustered around areas still loyal to the titan.

The druids seek to bring back the titan Kadum due to the what they perceive as “the arrogance of mortals” in regard to the cities that have risen. They see them as an affront to the Mountainshaker and wish nothing more than to see the titan return and bring down every structure in the Scarred Lands.

Organization

The Heartseekers are led by a council of druids who received the vision of the Heart of Kadum. Each druid is responsible for the recruitment of his own members, who then in turn must recruit others, and so on and so forth.

Those initiated into the cult must undergo the ritual of consuming the blood of Kadum in order to be considered a cultist. Not every initiate survives, which explains the low membership in the organization.

When the great one splashed into the waters that is part of my kingdom, I awoke from my slumber, and was afraid. His great form crashing into the Maw of Glory, I saw this as the sign that my brother's reign was soon nearing its end, and took the bounty that was the titan's blood. As I became more powerful and — more importantly — more aware, I soon gained the advantage I needed to overcome my impudent brother.

The titan's blood is a treasure. It changes. It transforms. The creatures under my rule grow strong, ready to defeat my enemies. However, the greatest treasure is the titan himself. He is something I wish to become — a power that is feared both under and above the seas.

With enough of the titan's blood, with the forces I have under my rule, this will become a reality. I swear it.

— The thoughts of Queen Ran



History

During the Blood Monsoon, a lone druid whose name has been forgotten received a vision of Kadum's heart. In this vision, it spoke to him, saying that he over all of Kadum's faithful was chosen to restore the beating organ to Kadum's breast. He was charged with the task of gathering initiates for the task of discovering where the heart is kept and with reuniting it with the Mountainshaker.

It was during this vision the druid was given the secret ritual of consuming the blood of Kadum, for only those who survived without suffering from madness, mutation or, worse, death could be worthy to enter this cult.

After the Blood Monsoon, the druid went to recruit many like-minded individuals, and their numbers grew by the dozens. Ten years after the Blood Monsoon, however, they came into conflict with the harpies of the Crescent Aerie, and most of the Heartseekers were killed. After painful years of reorganization, they have a sizable number of followers and are again amassing enough power in order to try to locate the Heart of Kadum.

Where the heart lies is anyone's guess. Most believe that when it was torn out of the Mountainshaker's chest, Belsameth took it to the Ebon Throne, where it still beats, albeit slowly, to this very day.

Locations

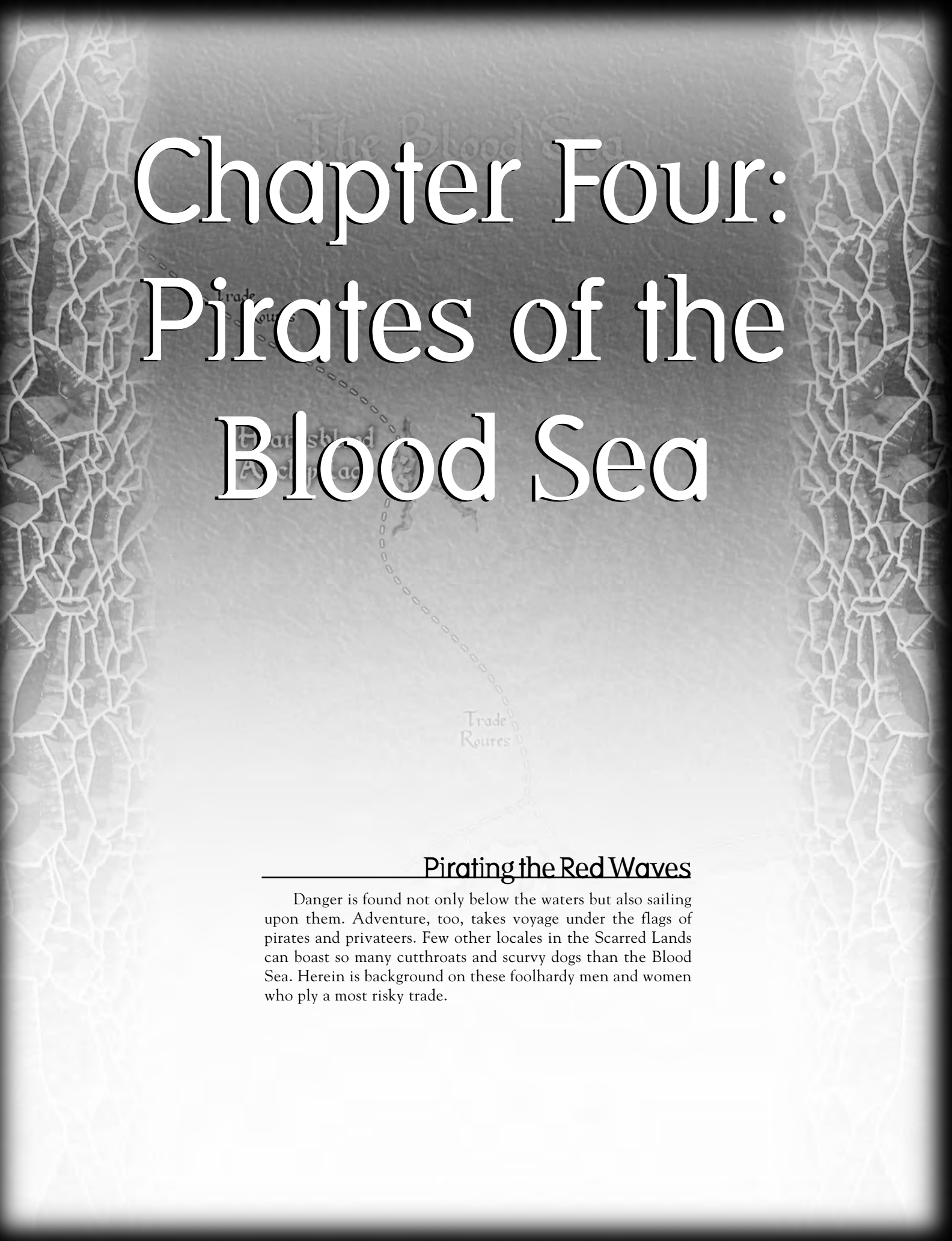
The Heartseekers are found in two areas since the skirmish with the Crescent Aerie. One is the Blood Basin, where the majority of them can be found during the winter, when the pink-tinted snows fall. The other location is the Blood Steppes, where they have a tenacious hold because of the constant feuding of the various tribes and groups found therein.

Notable Characters

Aera (*female human, Drd12, NE*) has been the leader of her group of the Heartseekers for two decades and shows no signs of giving up her leadership. Cold and ruthless, she is dedicated to her mission to recover the heart of Kadum, and anyone or anything that gets in her way is gotten rid of quickly.

Aera is also subtle, preferring to let her cultists carry out her plans. After all, she hasn't risen in the ranks of the Heartseekers by being impulsive and foolish. When the need arises, however, she is more than willing to do the job herself.

Gargash (*male minotaur, Bbn4, LE*) is one of the dangerous kinds of minotaur, an intelligent one. He's been a member of the cult for three years and plays the role of the muscle — something he's very good at. He tends to play the role of the typical dumb minotaur, then surprise his foes when they least expect it. In combat, he's a devastating opponent, something his enemies learn very quickly before he crushes them.



Chapter Four: Pirates of the Blood Sea

Pirating the Red Waves

Danger is found not only below the waters but also sailing upon them. Adventure, too, takes voyage under the flags of pirates and privateers. Few other locales in the Scarred Lands can boast so many cutthroats and scurvy dogs than the Blood Sea. Herein is background on these foolhardy men and women who ply a most risky trade.

Pirate Life

Many reasons exist why a person would choose the life of a pirate, but most revolve around three elements: wealth, freedom and adventure.

First and foremost is greed. A successful pirate can amass a breathtaking amount of riches and fine goods in his lifetime (which, for a number of reasons, is often far shorter than a mainlander's). A fisherman may be forced into smuggling and piracy if he can no longer haul in enough catch. An enlisted seaman in a country's navy may have poor earnings and envy the pay of officers. A soldier coming home from war may find little work. A sailor working for a wealthy merchant house may covet the rich holdings. A sorcerer may find herself exiled from her village. Any of these is sufficient reason for a person with the right knowledge and opportunity to become a pirate.

One also gains freedom in being a pirate. On land, a man may be the property of his ruler, suffering whatever cruelties that person deems. Piracy promises many a better life, the chance to leave land and country and be independent. Many crews choose their captains, having a say in the future and fate. Former slaves might find sanctuary only aboard a rogue vessel.

Finally, some seek to escape the drudgery of an ordinary life by taking up piracy. Youth who grew up in small villages on tales of adventure may find themselves at port. Bards seeking inspiration for new ballads take to the waters, and thrill-seekers yearn for the ultimate risk by roaming the Blood Sea.

Life at Sea

This isn't to say that life aboard ship is always exciting or even pleasurable. More often it is laborious and lacking. The common pirate wears one outfit, perhaps a jacket or canvas coat over tunic and breeches, until it is rags. Rarely are shoes worn aboard a ship. Caps and scarves keep the sun from beating down on head and neck. Finer clothes are saved for going into port to carouse and spend the loot — a man in tattered clothes one day sometimes will dress in splendor rivaling a nobleman the next.

As for all seamen, a pirate's day involves more care of the ship than sighting prey or counting loot. Pirate ships are more often than not overcrowded and those without the benefit of magic stink from refuse, dank wood and the poor hygiene of the men. Disease is always a risk under such conditions, especially should the food become rotten or infested with vermin.

No wonder when the lookout spots another ship's sail or land, all aboard become rapt with attention. Another ship means escape from the

boredom of sailing; land means fresh provisions and the chance to spend some coin or explore an unknown shore.

Of course, sometimes a pirate crew is hired out by parties that wish to avoid more honest channels. The ship might smuggle arms to a beleaguered nation, carry a hold of slaves or be the only crew brave (or greedy) enough to venture into uncharted territories.

Life on Land

After sufficient plundering, a pirate crew needs to return to a safe port. The ship must be refitted, the rigging mended and other general repairs attended to. The hull needs to be scraped of barnacles, especially in the Blood Sea, where letting such a task wait can be deadly. Fresh water and foodstuffs need to be either found or purchased.

But pirates most enjoy coming ashore to spend their loot and carouse. Most of the crew are complete wastrels, reveling in food and drink after famine days at sea, enjoying the company of loose men and women at brothels, losing fortunes on dice and betting. Needless to say, Shelzar is a much-liked port of call for pirates who like their vices.

Local merchants can expect to profit on the sudden wealth a pirate crew can bring, and often their prices will be raised for that occasion; locals are wise to avoid such establishments until the feisty sailors leave.

The Rich Rewards

The wealth that can be gained through piracy is staggering and can be counted not only in pieces of precious metal, jewelry or precious stones. More likely, the booty from looted merchant ships might be fine linens and clothes, rare spices and dyes, foodstuffs and liquor, art objects and even alchemical equipment.

Because the types of goods a ship might carry varies widely, by merchant house and country of origin, many pirates are choosy whether to attack a vessel to make sure that the booty is worth the risk and damage of battle. A good captain quickly becomes familiar with his prey and often has a network of informants as to what a ship might bear (a Profession (sailor) with 10 ranks adds a +2 synergy bonus to Gather Information checks that a pirate might have overheard some word of a particular ship's cargo, destination or origin). Only a desperate pirate crew, long at sea without any success, will attack the first ship that comes within spyglass view.

The crew, of course, yearns for its fair share of the plunder. The pirate code in theory says that loot is divided by shares, though certain high-

Pirate Code of Honor

Below is an example of the articles used by pirates in the Scarred Lands. These codes may vary a little from ship to ship. Knowledge of the code by an outsider will impress a pirate (maybe offering a +1 reaction bonus in certain circumstances).

The Articles of Piracy

Article 1: Every man shall obey command; the Captain shall have one full share and a half in all prizes. The First Mate, Quartermaster and Boatswain shall each have one and a quarter shares.

Article 2: If any man shall offer to run away or keep any secret from the Company, he shall be marroon'd with one bottle of Water and one small blade.

Article 3: If any Man shall steal any thing in the Company, or game, to the value of a gold coin, he shall be marroon'd or hung.

Article 4: If at any time we should meet another Marrooner (that is, Pirate) that that man shall sign his Articles without Consent of our Company, he shall suffer such Punishment as the Captain and Company shall think fit.

Article 5: That a man that shall strike another, whilst these Articles are in force, shall receive Manawe's Law (that is 30 stripes lacking one) on the bare back.

Article 6: That a Man that shall snap his arms, or smoke tobacco in the hold, without cap to his pipe, or carry a candle lighted without lantern, shall suffer the same punishment as in the former Article.

Article 7: That a Man that shall not keep his arms clean, fit for an engagement, or shall neglect his business, shall be cut off from his share, and suffer such other punishment as the Captain and Company shall think fit.

Article 8: If any man shall lose a joint in time of engagement, he shall have 400 pieces of gold; if a limb, 800.

Article 9: If at any time you meet with a prudent woman, the man who offers to meddle with her, without her consent, shall suffer Death.

ranking positions (captain, mate, helmsman, sea witch) earn additional shares. Treasure that cannot be easily split among the men, such as luxury items or jewels, would be taken by trusted men to be sold in towns such as Bloodport.

Pirates and Their ilk

Not all pirates who prey on passing ships are the same. Some are sailing brigands, while others ply their trade for king and country. A few care only for the thrill of battle and bloodshed, while others seek to enslave the defeated. A few of the more prevalent sorts of pirate are detailed below.

Privateers

Not all pirates are outlaws. A privateer is a pirate who by commission (often a document called a *letter of marque*) from a kingdom is authorized to seize or destroy the merchant vessels of another nation. In the Scarred Lands, Calastia issues the most commissions to privateers, though nearly every sizable nation or city-state has one or two working for it. The rationale is to weaken the enemy by interrupting shipping routes.

This "legitimized" piracy is not without its risks, as any privateer captured by an enemy nation could be charged and prosecuted for piracy. But the gains are also significant: While the sponsoring government is entitled to the lion's share of any plunder, the privateer and his crew are better equipped and supplied than most pirates and are still given a share in the loot.

Privateers are often charged with tracking down and defeating pirates. Because of this, anyone sailing under a letter of marque suffers a -2 reaction penalty with pirates and those who base their livelihood on such folk (for instance, privateers are not a welcome sight in Bloodport and often find few willing even to talk with them, let alone trade).

Searover

While the vast majority of pirates seek wealth and adventure on the open seas, a small few take more delight in chasing ships like prey only to board and slaughter. The booty they seek is in the cries of pain and fear as they strike down any who stand in their sights, be they merchant vessels, ships of war from other nations or even other pirate crews. To a man they swear allegiance to captain (and often to Vangal). These lot are referred to as searovers and are feared and despised all over. The surest way to insult a respectful pirate or privateer is to call him to his face a "rover."

Searovers tend to be the most mixed in terms of race and ethnicity compared to other pirate crews. It is not uncommon to find full-blooded orcs on board with their half-breed brethren, barbarians from Albadia working the lines next to outcast dwarves from Virduk, while a manticora takes delight in sharpening his axe in ready for the next assault. This odd lot is bound by a love of bloodshed and rarely mutinies unless the captain

proves himself too weak to keep them in hand, such as by foolishly offering a foe mercy.

Searovers tend to have levels of experience in barbarian as well as rogue. At least one of the crew will be one of Vangal's most faithful, with a level or two of clerical ability, who inspires the others to greater depths of destruction. Many searovers seek power through the Blood Sea pirate prestige class.

In Bloodport, searovers are tolerated. Most merchants care little for them; traders are rarely brought anything of value by their kind, while tavern- and brothel-owners worry that the tempers of 'rovers pose a risk to their establishments. The Meet of Dogs once convened to ban searovers from the shores of the Lush Isle, and that night several outraged 'rovers burned the Starboard Docks to the ground. The Meet decided to table the discussion for another day.

Slavers

Many nations in the Scarred Lands do not frown upon slavery. While moral philosophers argue few legitimate ways exist to acquire slaves in the first place, certain pirates specialize in taking ships not for their cargoes but for their crews.

These slavers are some of the more cruel and oppressive sailors, seeing life as merely worthy of coin. They tend to be lawful evil in alignment and

have most of their dealings with nations of similar sentiment, such as Dunahnae. They are total opportunists and prey on any vessel, as well as raiding small coastal villages and ports under cover of darkness.

The majority of crewmen aboard a slaver ship are either warriors, fighters or rogues. Priests of Chardun are welcome aboard and may, in fact, be ranking sailors, especially if they possess some additional experience as thieves. Humans or charduni exiles make up most slaver crews.

Some slavers specialize in their prey, seeking out specific ethnicities or races. Oolar the Grim, for instance, an ex-soldier from Calastia, enslaves only fierce humanoids, which he sells to places such as Shelzar for bloody games of sport or as two evil mages as collared guardians. Women from Albadia often fetch high prices for their beauty and fierce spirit.

Slavers frequent Bloodport far less often than their pirate kin and usually only when hiding from enemies. A fair number of nobles and governments have high bounties out on the heads of infamous slavers, the former for kidnapping a dear friend, relative or servant, the latter for preying on unsuspecting citizenry. Privateers who specialize in bringing slavers to justice are some of the most lauded.



Officers and Crew

Though every man aboard ship must pull his weight, they indeed have roles to play and positions of note. Otherwise bedlam and mutiny would reign. In this section the most commonly encountered crew standings are detailed along with suggestions on skill ranks. Very few crewmen aboard ship will have fewer than 3 ranks in Swimming (and those with such little skill would be the greenest of sailors).

Captain

Most landlubbers would be surprised to know that most pirate crews are rather democratic, with captains elected and each member required to sign articles and learn the rules of conduct. The captain's authority can be questioned and a majority of the crew can choose another from among them to take over. A good captain is aggressive but not foolhardy, with strength of will and personality to lead even the unruliest of seamen. Mutinies occasionally occur, usually when the crew feels the captain has betrayed their loyalty, in which case they elect a new leader from their midst. Deposed captains may be marooned or set adrift.

Some pirate captains, however, rule over a ship like victorious tyrants. These are often searovers or other pirates of evil alignment, and few who have used the tainted waters of the Blood Sea to enhance their prowess (as with those of the Blood Sea pirate prestige class) would ever allow their command to be based on the vote of a common sailor. Captains normally have a Profession (sailor) of at least 10 ranks and are well advised to have the Leadership feat.

First Mate

The first mate normally has a Profession (sailor) of at least 8 ranks. He serves as second-in-command to the captain, often being given the tasks that require a trusted presence but also risk (such as going ashore to seek out supplies, leading a raiding party and negotiating with ornery merchants). The first mate is usually the crewman who has served the longest under the captain; he is not elected but is chosen by the captain.

Quartermaster

Some of the larger pirate crews have an individual serving as the elected quartermaster. In some cases the captain's equal, the quartermaster is in charge of the routine tasks aboard ship. He sees to it that the crewmen's interests are served and sometimes maintains order. The quartermaster also distributes food and equipment to the crew. Should the pirates capture a ship and choose to keep it, the quartermaster usually assumes the role of captain on that vessel.

Between the captain and the quartermaster, the rules of conduct are enforced. These range from how shares of booty are divided to acceptable behavior (for instance drinking on watch), to settling grievances (bloody or not so bloody). Should a rule be breached, little room can be left for pity, commonly considered a weakness at sea. The cat o' nine tails might be brought out for lashes, a crewman could be tied to the mast for several days without food or water, or, in more severe punishments, he might be strung up from the spar or pushed overboard. Keeping secrets and stealing from another crew member are grounds for being marooned without supplies. Being so slothful that you are in no shape to fight will deny you a share of plunder. Serious crimes are tried by a jury of the entire crew. Quartermasters normally have a Profession (sailor) of at least 7 ranks and Sense Motive of 5 ranks.

Boatswain

The boatswain oversees the maintenance of a ship. Reporting to the captain, he supervises all deck activities, from dropping anchor to hauling sails, as well as repairs. He may have a carpenter or two under him. Boatswains normally have a Profession (sailor) of at least 5 ranks and Craft of 5 ranks.

Mate

A large ship often has more than a single mate. These sailors function as apprentices to the other positions as well as manage the sails, yards and mooring of the ship.

Other Positions

A large vessel might have a ship surgeon to tend the injured (having 5 or more ranks in First Aid and possibly skill in Craft (alchemy)), an artilleryist to oversee weapons of war, a cartographer for aiding navigation, cooks (most vessels lack galleys and make do with cauldrons on deck) and cabin boys.

Practices of Piracy

This section covers some of the more notable habits and practices pirates are known for. Additional behavior may be influenced by the cultures and backgrounds of the crew. For instance, those hailing from Dunahnae may be severe in their demeanor and actually use undead aboard ship, while a captain from Shelzar could be famous for wooing every prisoner.

Infamous Flags

Most pirates and privateers fly "colors," or flags. The design varies wildly but some standards exist. Many utilize a black flag with white emblems such as skulls or knives, meant to show the

possible fate that awaits those who resist; most pirates hope that merchant ships cow and surrender with little fight. An established pirate captain always has his own variant. Searovers, in addition to their personal colors, always raise a red flag, indicating no mercy will be shown. While prowling the seas, many pirates do not fly their battle flag, remaining anonymous until within close sight.

Privateers by law are supposed to fly the flag of the nation issuing their commission. Some devious pirates actually try to dupe merchant ships by flying the very same flags even though they lack any jurisdiction.

Burying Treasure

Few pirates actually bury chests of booty they have plundered. Most coin is spent on pleasures in town. A few — usually the most avaricious of the lot — do hide away caches of gold and precious jewels and even arcane objects. Sometimes privateers seek to hide wealth from their sponsoring nation for when they retire.

One of the most common practices is for the captain, along with a trusted mate, to bring ashore a few men to help hide the loot. The most villainous pirates then slaughter the crewmen after the treasure has been buried so that they may not reveal the secret or attempt to dig it up at some later date. Even those of less sinister bent follow the tradition of killing one man so that his spirit may guard the treasure (usually as a ghost but sometimes as a wight). Additional mechanical traps may also be used.

A map is drawn in the deceased sailor's blood with landmarks and notations, sometimes with false leads and riddles. Powerful necromancers are said to be able to discern how old a map is and what spirit guards the treasure by holding such a map and concentrating (requires a DC 25 Spellcraft check).

Capturing a Ship

Pirates rely on speed, surprise and intimidation to capture another vessel. Most pirate ships lack the armament to defeat the largest galleons but are far faster and more maneuverable than their larger cousins. Thus, pirates' normal tactics involve boarding an enemy ship as quickly as possible, looting the goods and then retreating.

The pirate crew's goal is to come alongside the target and to swing or leap over. During this time, the pirates will be making as much noise as possible, often sounding horns and throwing thunderstones and lit smokesticks onto the other vessel, all to cause confusion and fear in the enemy.

After defeating the enemy ship's sailors, the pirates steal all provisions and take as much of the loot as they can hold. Depending on alignment, the pirates may or may not leave survivors, take slaves to work the hardest chores at sea, or sink the ship behind them.

Magic, of course, is a wild card in any engagement, as a powerful spellcaster (especially a sea witch) can change the tide of any battle. The simplest spells such as *animate rope*, *doom* or *obscuring mist* can have very real effects. That is why the more noted pirate captains all have aboard at least one crewman who has some measure of magical talent.

Pirate Ships

Pirates sail many types of ships, but most seek vessels suited for speed as they rely upon quick assaults and quicker escapes when necessary. A ship has to be kept in constant good repair, free of barnacles and seaweed, or any advantage is lost. The more common varieties encountered are detailed below.

The single-masted sloop or cutter has a bowsprit almost as long as her hull, making her exceptionally swift. With a good wind, a sloop can exceed 11 knots. This small vessel can carry around 75 pirates and nearly a dozen ballista. With speed and a shallow draft (bottom), she is best as a predator in channels and sounds rather than the open sea. Sloops can hide in coastal waters where larger ships can not follow. Smugglers also prefer the sloop, with its room for cargo and ability to navigate hidden coves.

The brigantine is a far larger and expensive ship at 150 tons and 80 feet long. It can bear more men and has a hold nearly twice the size of a sloop's. She has two masts and is often square-sailed. This ship is designed for battle and used mostly by navies rather than pirates, who prefer quick raids. An ambitious (and wealthy) pirate who captures a brigantine might well choose to keep it rather than setting it aflame.

The corsairs (mostly deserters of the Dunahnaen navy) of the Inferno Gulf and surrounding waters use oar-powered galleys rowed by slaves. These long and slender ships have speed and maneuverability. A sail can be hoisted on a single mast for additional running. The corsairs sometimes number a hundred and once they come aside to another ship they swam aboard like locusts.

The warship is rarely used by pirates, as they tend to be too large and slow and rarely are fit for ocean voyages. They have single masts as well as oars and can easily hold a crew of well over 150, though the conditions will be cramped at that number. Calastia has the most warships of any navy in Ghelspan.

Pirate Campaigns

A campaign centered around the adventurers as pirates or privateers can be richly exciting and challenging. Life sailing the oceans has a romance about it that never fades. The sea beckons many but rewards few — especially if that sea is the Blood Sea.

Character Classes

If the players are beginning the campaign with new characters, the GM should take into account the effects of character class as featured below (which can also be consulted when creating NPCs to encounter and interact with). Not all classes mix well together aboard ship and some have special considerations.

Barbarians

It is not at all unknown for barbarians to become pirates. Indeed, in Albadia, entire villages along the Stiffening Sea raid other coastal settlements and passing ships. Many of the searovers, the most bloodthirsty of pirates, are barbarians. Often being illiterate and backward, few ever develop the talents necessary to rise in rank and secure one of the higher positions aboard large ships. Still, the barbarians' class skills are well suited to life at sea.

Bards

A bard aboard any sailing vessel can be a most useful crewman. Bardic knowledge can help decipher a mysterious map or lead to lost treasure. Their skills at gathering information and carousing often surpass a rogue's, and a bit of cheerful song at a tavern in Bloodport will go farther than a bribe of gold. Also, the arcane talents of the bard do not often provoke the prejudice that many ignorant sailors have for sorcerers and bookish wizards. A bard's ability to use song to affect those around him magically can not only *inspire courage* but also overcome the tedium of laboring all day long. Such music is often referred to as *sea shanties* (see the Appendix for more on these).

Clerics

With the harsh life at sea, often faced with poor provisions, the threat of disease and much-needed healing after any skirmish, a cleric is rarely unwanted among pirates. Of course, the question of how welcome depends on alignment and what god is served.

The most common cleric found aboard any ship worships the demigoddess Manawe, especially those of the Tidebrethren order. Sailors and pirates consider having such a priest aboard a sign of good fortune, and a portion of any loot



will go toward Manawe's church. Rarely, if ever, will a priest of the Mother of Oceans serve aboard a ship alongside a sea witch.

A priest of Corean will only assist privateers authorized by Mithril. Among such he serves as moral authority and inspiration to ensure that morale stays high during arduous voyages. Their talent in wielding fire for holy purposes makes them dangerous to pirate vessels.

Priests of Madriel serve as healers aboard ships, mostly privateers, but now and then a tolerant cleric may stay with pirates to ensure that no one, pirate or merchant victim, is hurt. They also are charged with defeating undead, such as blood zombies. Obviously, evil pirates and searovers will not stomach such mercy and may either ransom or kill the offending priest.

After the Lady of the Deep, Enkili's worshippers make up the most crew, and his priests are also very welcome aboard ship. The more adventurous pirates often draw clerics of the Jester to their side to share in the thrills of raiding corrupt merchants and rescuing damsels (or lads) in distress from villains. These priests tend to be as much swashbucklers as their mates.

Priests of Chardun can be found aboard ships of more tyrannical pirates, especially slavers. Charduni sometimes leave the shores of Termana to become pirates, as do second sons of Dunahnae's hereditary priestly caste, believing they can better serve the god outside the nation than from within.

Some priests of Belsameth seek life as a pirate more to spread their goddess' influence and gather information from captured prisoners. Their natural rapport with thieves makes them easy negotiators in fencing goods.

The only known instances where a priest of Vangal the Reaver lives at sea is as part of a searover crew. Rarely are these priests exceptionally powerful, as they often choose to supplement their skills with more larcenous experience and levels in rogue or barbarian.

Druids

Though Denev is of the land, some druids feel the need to leave her shores and explore the watery reaches of Scarn, often to the dismay and ridicule of their fellows (a druid who spends many years at sea may gain a reaction penalty to mainland brethren). Yet one cannot deny the usefulness of their magic aboard a wooden ship — with one spell a druid can repair a breach in the hull or destroy an enemy vessel's mast. Traditionally, the sea was seen as the domain of

Kadum, Lethene and Gulaben, though druids of many faiths found reasons to sail its surface, from druids of Thulkas who explored newly forming volcanoes beneath the surface of the water to druids of Mesos interested in the magical practices of aquatic races.

Fighters

Usually fighters are part of a privateer or pirate crew, or marines in service to their country's navy. Their class skills are less useful than those of the barbarian or rogue, but their talent for combat offsets this. As often the taking of a ship requires intense melee combat after boarding, a good fighter can turn the tide. The access to many Feats is also useful, especially Athletic, Endurance and Sea Legs (see Appendix for the last).

Monks

An order of monks known as *waveriders* originally hailed from the city-state of Rahoch, the most prosperous sea port on Ghelspad. These men and women have learned to attune themselves spiritually to the natural rhythms of the sea. They lack monastery and temple, seeing the sea as their home and proving ground. Waveriders would seek to ensure order aboard a vessel as a representation of the harmony the sea can provide. Mutiny, to such disciplined individuals, is an aberration.

Paladins

Paladins may seem ill-suited at first for privateer campaigns, but only if one adheres strictly to the notion of armored knight on horseback. Yes, one has little need for a faithful steed aboard a ship (and the horse would severely tax the resources). Heavy armor too would be a detriment, laughed at by sailors and a death trap while aboard ship. However, some of the most dedicated ship guardians and pirate-hunters are paladins who have adapted to life at sea. Their immunity to disease offers them an edge, and their ability to heal is well respected.

Rangers

The many skills of the ranger class make it an excellent choice for both pirate and privateer. Sailors hailing from more primitive peoples (and races) that dwell on isolated islands are good candidates for this class. Their knack for being scouts and foraging with Wilderness Lore can help secure supplies.

While tracking is nearly useless at sea (though consider the Wake Trailing feat in the Appendix), the ranger's tenacity and depth more than make up for this lost ability. Ranger privateers often choose as their favored enemies evil aquatic races, while notorious pirates may opt for their own kind.

Rogues

The overwhelming majority of noted pirate and privateer characters are rogues. Success in such paths, which requires a skilled tongue as well as arm, the ability to know your prey and seek its weakness and never overlooking the fickleness of the sea, all demand skills. Feats such as Deft Hands are also advantageous. The rogue's gift at being an expert in many fields, some larcenous, some not, gives them an edge compared to every other class. Having access to a network of thieves, fences and spies is a resource for any good privateer and pirate alike.

Sorcerers

The chaotic life of a pirate tempts many a sorcerer, who sees kindred spirits in his crewmates who dare the risks of the open sea. He must consider the dangers, though: Sailors are perhaps the most superstitious of professions, and many may show ill will toward a sorcerer in their midst. The powerful presence that sorcerers possess can either work to their advantage or cause dissent and betrayal.

Wizards

The learning and prestige of wizards are often at odds with pirate life, which is often why they make better privateers. The last thing a wizard wants is to feel the prejudice of his

crewmates at being perceived as bookish or too smart for his own good. Aboard ship, low-level wizards will be expected to perform the same labors as the rest unless they can impress upon others their magical skills.

Specialist wizards may find their focused talents in demand. An abjurer may be able to protect a vessel from the elements or the ballistae of an enemy ship. A conjurer can call forth some of the denizens of the deep. The diviner best serves by ascertaining what a merchant ship's hold might contain or discovering lost treasures. Enchanters can prevent mutiny and swell the ranks of a crew without resorting to press gangs. Evokers are the most dangerous wizards when it comes to naval battles. Illusionists can hide an entire ship in a fog or create phantom krakens. Necromancers are rarely liked by pirate or privateer as their focus on death is unnerving to sailors, but none will deny the benefit of the *undead crew* spell. Transmuters can work wonders with the very ships they stand upon.

Low-level Adventures

In beginning campaigns with low-level characters, the more realistic elements of sea life should be mentioned often — the risk of starvation, the foul conditions aboard cramped



ships and so forth. This will add a bit of desperation to the campaign that serves to motivate the characters to seek their fortune and better their lives.

As opposed to land-based campaigns, the players here will rarely be on their own while at sea. They will, no doubt, be part of a larger crew, with a captain. Just because someone has command over them should not give the DM license to be so restrictive of their actions and movements that they lose free will and fun. Nor should they suddenly find themselves as masters of a fine sailing ship at this point, either. The early adventures should be about providing perspective.

Opponents at this point should be on the level of weak sea monsters, the local watch in city ports, drunk warriors who start bar-room brawls and the like.

Privateer: The characters might not be immediately commissioned by whatever government the DM chooses. Instead they might be watched and judged as they tackle some threats to a coastal town or island village. Eventually, perhaps at 3rd or 4th level, they will be called into the seat of office and offered a letter of marque. Some court intrigue may be introduced as well as powerful NPCs, both those favorable to the party and those against.

Pirate: The important thing to consider is, what motivated the characters to seek a life of piracy? Some might already be seamen about a ship and others released from slavery or approached to join and strengthen the crew. Beginning raids on small vessels will provide a challenge at this point. Enemy NPCs who should be encountered but not necessarily yet dealt with can range from powerful merchant lords to rival pirate captains.

Medium-level Adventures

More magic and the supernatural become involved in the game at this point as the characters progress in level. They should be less bothered by many of the hardships at sea; food and water can be conjured, repairs made by magic, and they are certainly harder than most sailors and can resist disease better. Opponents too will have more power (whether that be magical, political or simple brute strength).

Privateer: The characters can now be slowly drawn into some of the political machinations surrounding their hire. Is the nation that commissioned them at war? Per-

haps they are sent out after a powerful pirate captain or to rescue hostages held in Bloodport. The naval encounters and battles should be more thrilling and risky.

Pirate: At this point the characters may be considering electing one of their own as captain or quartermaster, giving them more authority over the crew they sail with. This can be encouraged through adventures that find the crew voting for a character after he performs some noted deed. The rulers of nations and certainly merchant houses will take notice of the characters and may send forces out to stop them. Now is the best time for maps of buried treasure and adventures at port with interesting NPCs.

High-level Adventures

At this level of campaign, the realistic elements of sailing should be abandoned. At least one of the player characters should hold the rank of captain aboard ship (and the party may possess more than one vessel). The enemies hold vast power and will not be hesitant to use it against the players.

Privateer: The characters may hold rank in their nation's navy. They will be considered the premier defense against pirates and enemy ships. They are more prone, though, to the casualties of intrigue. Powerful Blood Sea or devil bat pirates are appropriate matches for shipboard opponents, while worshippers of Kadum will add some spice. On occasion the characters may even venture underwater to face the perils of the depths.

Pirate: As authorities on their ship(s), the characters may have to reckon with the will of their crew. The loot now desired will only be satisfying if it is a princely sum: ransoming a beautiful duchess, recovering a secret weapon created by the charduni, stealing some recent plunder from a rival captain. When adventuring inland, more exotic finds such as lost temples or strange crypts guarded by fearsome beasts are appropriate. Perhaps too the risk of corruption by the Blood Sea needs to be faced.

Notorious Pirates

The pirates of the Blood Sea are generally considered to be some of the most vicious and dangerous of their ilk anywhere. Among sailors, the term "bloodthirsty pirate" often refers to the habit of some pirates on the Blood Sea of turning the blood of Kadum into a vile alcohol; it is thus not a lightly rendered insult.

Empire of the Sea

History: The impressive pirate fleet known as the Empire of the Sea had significantly less lofty origins as the Blood Shark band, a scrungy lot led by a so-called “Prince Adamer” who really was little more than the bastard son of a petty Calastian noble. More than a year of poor spoils and seeing their captain drink too much rum tainted by Blood Sea water left the crew near mutiny on a number of occasions. Adamer’s final error was waylaying a ship sailing for Termana that he had wrongly believed held silver ingots. Instead, the vessel held explorers and refugees.irate at a worthless cargo — for all his flaws, Adamer was not a slaver — he took out his frustration by trying to force himself on the most beautiful woman aboard. He missed both the look in her eyes and her concealed dagger. The crew was almost thankful they had been released from such a dismal captain and were impressed with the way Kariosa Nephantaros handled herself. They welcomed her among themselves and in a matter of months her natural instinct prevailed and they elected her captain. With lofty goals, she renamed the band the Empire of the Sea and set about to plunder the surrounding territories.

Upon returning to the band’s hideaway in the center of the island of Roh Ahnon, she began training her crew with an almost military zeal. Early dissenters were marooned on the dangerous southern reaches of the island, a method that soon gave way to a test of potential recruits. Should someone survive the harpies and a small band of hill giants still loyal to Kadum, he is welcomed personally by Nephantaros and given a masterwork dagger as proof of his entrance into the Empire.

Because of her disdain for the upper classes and nobility, Nephantaros boldly set her sights on the grandest vessels of merchant fleets, seeking to deprive the haughty lords on the mainland of their

luxuries. Where some female pirate captains revel in wearing jewels and fine garments suitable for a queen, Nephantaros refuses to give any outward show of her personal wealth. Indeed she is known to bury chests of loot under the sands in northern Roh Ahnon and perhaps on other islands deeper in the Blood Sea.

While a most competent pirate, one of the main reasons for Nephantaros’ success is her talent for inspiring her crew. Even though the Empire is now a fleet of ships, each sailing under its own captain, every one of the pirates respects the authority and judgment of the “Empress of the Sea.” After almost a decade of successful campaigns against the merchant houses, her crew has enjoyed much wealth.

Many are now troubled by Nephantaros’ recent obsession with bringing down House Asuras, however. While most of the crew can understand her rancor, they have difficulty empathizing; after all, the life of a pirate is short and brutal and someone out there always wants your neck. Should their Empress’ desire for revenge lead to short-sightedness, some may choose that as their opportunity to leave her authority and branch out on their own.



Vessels: The Empire currently possesses a fleet of 10 ships. Half of these are single-masted cutters, fast and shallow-bottomed, holding crews of 30–50 men. The cutters usually prowl the mainland's coast, traveling as far south as Hedrad. The other ships are larger vessels, including one three-masted frigate from Zathiske, renamed the *Telling Scar*, that Nephantaros personally captains. The *Scar* is impressively armed with more than a dozen heavy ballista and a small catapult to throw alchemist's fire.

Location: The settlement of Resolution on the island of Roh Ahnon serves as the home port of the Empire. Resolution is protected by a wooden palisade and shelters more than three hundred men, women and children, though rarely is half that number present at any one time.

The Empire has a “territory” of the Toe Islands, the coastlands around the city of Mithril, the Northern Perimeter and south past Hedrad. While the Empire's ships visit the Heartsblood Archipelago, often to trade with Bloodport, in recent months they have stopped prowling much of the Blood Sea as Nephantaros orders her crew to stop any ship she suspects is from House Asuras.

Alignment: The majority of the Empire pirates are chaotic neutral in alignment. A few crewmembers are neutral evil, but none holds any position of real power.

Allies and Enemies: The Empire has no real allies. Nephantaros was once friends with Chay Caronus (some have speculated they were also lovers), who now leads a mercenary company guarding the seaside portion of Mithril. But while Caronus is relieved that the Empire is known for leaving survivors, she still cannot accept the path Nephantaros has chosen. Caronus worries that one day Mithril will offer her a commission to bring Nephantaros in, an offer she might well have to accept.

Rival merchant houses to Asuras have tried to extend relations with Nephantaros, but such attempts are always fruitless.

The Empire has enemies, though, far too many these days for its own good. The main foe is House Asuras. Now that their ships are being singled out, the family heads are beginning to be bolder in their plans to destroy the Empire. Huge bounties are being placed on Nephantaros' and her captains' heads, in sums that have other pirates in the region, as well as some adventurers, taking notice.

Some of the other pirate bands in the region, especially those hailing from Algos, care little for

the Empire. They see it as an anathema to what pirating stands for: freedom. They see Nephantaros as trying to establish her own regime and suppressing her fellow rogues. The increased attention by the authorities of Mithril has also troubled the other pirate bands, who may soon take action against her.

Notable Personages: Kariosa Nephantaros (*female human Ftr5/Rog5, CN*) is the self-styled Empress of Pirates. Nephantaros is a most bitter woman constantly reminded of her path in life by the livid scar that mars one side of her otherwise pretty face — given to her as a maiden while serving in a nobleman's court. When lost in thought or facing a difficult decision, Nephantaros can be observed lightly stroking the length of her scar. She has refused any magical or alchemical treatments for the mark.

Nephantaros is aware that she is slowly dying emotionally and at times is overcome with a deep sadness that drives her to wandering alone. Woe to anyone who attempts to accost the Empress during these bouts of melancholy, for her usual mercy will be forgotten until it is too late. Nephantaros worries over her eventual fate, seeing no escape from the life she has fashioned for herself. In truth, she would love to recapture her stolen innocence at any price.

One of Nephantaros' most trusted captains is Brene Sarl (*male human Sor6, CN*). He hails from a small fishing village along the Celestial Shelf and for years kept his powers secret for fear he might be killed as a titanspawn. Brene joined the Empire when they rescued him and his shipmates from a blood zombie attack. He was instantly smitten by the cold but beautiful Empress and worked hard to rise in the ranks so as to be closer to her. He knows about her past, though, and has never dared express his feelings for her.

Signs and Symbols: One of Nephantaros' first acts as captain was to burn the ship's old colors of a pale shark against a black background, replacing it with a white dagger dripping a single drop of red blood.

Pirates of the Empire of the Sea: The pirate crews of the Empire are mostly rogues with a few fighters who are drawn by the tactics Nephantaros employs. They are also nearly all human (indeed, some outsiders have accused the Empress of bearing a dislike for other races). Because of the odd initiation process of stranding potential crew on the southern end of Roh Ahnon, many have the feat Endurance or Self-Sufficient and have some ranks in Survival.

The Splintered Skull

History: Soon after the titan Gormoth created what became known as sundered mages (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**), one of those creatures sought the isolation of the mist-shrouded island of Algos. There, Til-Tal, as it came to call itself, suffered the constant wracking pain in silence, becoming more and more bitter as the years past. In time, though, men intruded upon the island. One night, Til-Tal crept out of its caverns and observed the newcomers. They were a motley lot, thieves and rogues who sought to hide among the many coves that made up the island's shore. The first group Til-Tal destroyed without much thought. Likewise the second. The pirates began avoiding the coastline nearest to the sundered mage's lair, saying it was cursed.

Eventually, another band of pirates came. This group, however, was different from the others. These were a brutal lot and brought prisoners. Some they held for ransom and simply tormented them. The others they killed, partially as a means of terrifying their captives into submission. Til-Tal watched, attention strangely drawn to the spectacle of blood before it. Intrigued, the sundered mage decided to stay its hand and didn't destroy them. Instead, when next they returned to the island, it observed them more closely. They returned several times, and Til-Tal fomented a plan to distract itself from its suffering.

Under an assumed guise as a wild-haired madman (thanks to a *change self* spell), the sundered mage approached the leader of the band of searovers, an orc named Krid, and claimed to be sent by Vangal himself to foster their thirst for mayhem. Til-Tal had to kill threw of the 'rover crew before they were impressed enough to listen.

Now, under the direction of Til-Tal, the band of the Splintered Skull raids not only passing ships but also small fishing communities in Ghelspad. They leave nearly no one

alive, making sure that at least one victim survives so that their crimes may go well noticed. So far the 'rovers have no clue they are being duped in the name of their god.

Vessels: The Splintered Skull sails an unnamed sloop with a single mast and a blood-red sail. The crew is roughly 20 strong, smaller than most pirate bands, but what they lack in numbers they more than make up for in brute strength: Only three are human. The rest of the crew is made up of five half-orcs, a brine hagling cabin boy (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**) and the rest full-blooded orcs. The sloop is perfect for traveling along the coast and outrunning larger ships. Though they lack a ballista (preferring to outrun those ships capable of engaging in combat), the searovers all have ready access to stacks of javelins.

Location: When not out raiding, the Splintered Skull rests in a small cove on the western side of Algos. This area is still considered accursed by the other pirates who use the island and so they are rarely disturbed. About a mile inland from the searovers' cove are the caves in which Til-Tal dwells (he rarely sets foot aboard the ship).

These 'rovers prowl the coasts of western Ghelspad, especially along the Northern Perimeter and the Cordrada Corridor. Til-Tal has been growing bored with them and has considered sending the Skulls out to slaughter some of the villages farther south.

Alignment: All of these pirates are chaotic evil in alignment.



Til-Tal, Sundered Mage: CR 8; SZ Medium aberration; HD 8d8 + 40 or 4d8 + 20; hp 72 or 36; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+2 Dex, +4 natural, +2 *bracers of armor*) or 16/14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, and one body has +2 *bracers of armor*); Atk +7 melee or +5 melee x2 (1d4 damage, 20/x2); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SA spells; SQ dual-form, darkvision, regenerate 6 or 3, see invisible/ethereal, all-around vision; AL NE; SV Fort +7 or +6, Ref +4 or +3, Will +10 or +8; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 18

Skills: Bluff +8, Concentration +10, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Search +8, Spellcraft +10, Spot +12.

Feats: Combat Casting, Enlarge Spell, Maximize Spell.

Possessions: *bracers of armor* +2, ring of minor fire resistance, 2 masterwork daggers.

Sorcerer Spells per Day: 6/7/7/7/5/3 or 6/7/7/6/4.

Sorcerer Spells Known: 0-lvl — *arcane mark, detect magic, dowsing, mage hand, open/close, read magic, resistance, steal sleep, touch of fatigue*; 1st — *change self, mage armor, magic aura, protection from good, unseen servant*; 2nd — *alter self, arcane lock, ethereal bolt, rend the sovereign soul, rune of darkness*; 3rd — *Austlinan's violent scream, dispel magic, fracture, mask magic*; 4th — *bloodied blade, minor creation, minor globe of invulnerability*; 5th — *dreadmantle, Mesos' vengeance*; 6th — *eyebite*.

Allies and Enemies: The Splintered Skulls have no need of allies. They seek neither wealth nor power — their treasure is carnage. Because of this, most other pirate bands avoid them.

Notable Personages: Til-Tal (*sundered mage, NE*) is a very old creature and has an excellent memory for suffering. It has realized that the only relief is through distraction, and so it entertains itself with the searovers. In its disguise, the sundered mage appears as a 6'4" tall human dressed in bloody rags, with wild shaggy red hair and beard.

The crew of the Splintered Skull is led by Captain Krid (*male orc, Bbn4/Rog2, CE*), a savage orc who proudly never washes away any of the gore from battle (he actually tries not to enter the water if possible). Krid rose to minor chieftain status in a tribe from the Plains of Lede but was defeated by a band of Veshian vigilants. The orc fled to the coast, where he briefly fell in with a brine hag on the North Shore, who taught him seamanship. He tired of all her plotting, murdered her and dragged along her hagling as a plaything. Soon he gathered together others, then saw piracy as a new means to a bloody end.

Signs and Symbols: The symbol of the Splintered Skulls is a human skull cleaved in twain by

an axe blade, and the two halves facing outward. The crew flies a flag with that symbol on a field of black.

Pirates of the Splintered Skulls: The pirate crew of the Splintered Skulls is made up of barbarians and warriors who have some skill in Profession (sailor). Most practice some of the more violent feats (such as Cleave and Improved Critical). All pay homage to Vangal, but for some it is more lip service and an excuse to shed blood.

Cerdenal's Lot (Night Takers)

History: One of the newest pirate bands to hole up in the coves of Algos, Cerdenal's Lot are a small crew who specialize in surreptitiously stealing cargo and goods from ships in the dark rather than engaging in battle, a tactic that has given them the nickname of "Night Takers." They are led by a man named Cerdenal, a quiet, unassuming soul who has some talent for both magic and thievery. Cerdenal claims that he was marooned for several years on the Drifting Isle, a tale bolstered by the otherworldly air about him.

Cerdenal assembled his band in Bloodport, seeking green sailors and promising them loot without risk. At first some were doubters, but ever since the first few midnight raids on anchored vessels, not a drop of the crew's blood has been spilled and they have come back to port rich.

Many these days seek out the Night Takers eager to join them, but to date Cerdenal has limited the numbers, fearing that too large a crew may become unwieldy and violence might erupt on one of their raids.

Vessels: The Night Takers sail a large galleon, the *Fugue*, that could easily fit three times the number of men currently aboard (a little more than 25). Cerdenal claims to have taken the ship himself from a sleeping captain, setting the old crew adrift in life boats without them ever waking. The ship is fitted with several skiffs that can be lowered, as usually the crew approaches a quiet ship at night in the smaller boats.

Location: Cerdenal's crew maintains two homes: one a deep cove on the southern reaches of Algos and the other in Bloodport. The Night Takers steal only from deep-water vessels, so their range covers much of the Blood Sea between Ghelspad and Termana.

Alignment: Most of Cerdenal's crew are chaotic neutral; he dislikes hiring very evil-minded rogues for fear that they will do harm to slumbering targets.

Cerdenal, Leader of the Night Takers, Male Human, Rogue4/Enchanter6: CR 10; SZ Medium humanoid (5'9"); HD 4d6 + 6d4; hp 22; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 bracers of armor); Atk +6 melee (dagger 1d4, 20/x2), +4 ranged (1d8+2, 20/x3 short spear+2); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SA: sneak attack +1d6; SQ evasion, uncanny dodge; AL TN; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 19, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills: Alchemy +10, Appraise +12, Bluff +7, Concentration +2, Decipher Script +8, Gather Information +11, Hide +8, Innuendo +6, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Open Lock +4, Pick Pocket +4, Profession (apothecary) +8, Profession (sailor) +9, Scry +19, Search +10, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +8, Spot +7, Swim +5, Use Magic Device +8.

Feats: Expertise, Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Mastery (*alibi*, *deep slumber*, *invisibility*, *sleep*), Spell Penetration, Stealthy, Still Spell.

Possessions: bracers of armor +1, magic raven ring, wand of dream (21 charges), 2 armor in a bottle, potion of cure light wounds.

Familiar: Rat.

Wizard Spells Known (4/4/4/3): 0-lvl — *daze*, *detect magic*, *false flavor*, *filch*, *ghost sounds*, *mage hand*, *read magic*, *steal sleep*; 1st — *cobwebs*, *detect secret doors*, *endure elements*, *hypnotism*, *message*, *sleep*, *unseen servant*; 2nd — *alibi*, *darkvision*, *daze monster*, *fog cloud*, *invisibility*, *swift water*; 3rd — *arcane parry*, *deep slumber*, *mask of virtue*, *slow*, *suggestion*.

Allies and Enemies: Cerdenal has many friends in Bloodport, including Captain Trask of the Meet of Dogs. His raids are something of a mystery and thus many in the pirate town seek to know more of him by offering gifts and favors.

Even more impressive (but not widely known), Cerdenal has made a pact with one of the dream folk (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**). One of the crew whispered over too much drink that Cerdenal had promised the outsider great feasting on the dreams of sailors in return for aid. Whether this has already occurred or will happen in the future remains to be seen.

Because he never harms a target ship's crew, Cerdenal is oft-referred to by merchants as a "gentleman pirate." Indeed, some who have had goods taken brag about their loss as if singled out by good fate.

Notable Personages: Cerdenal (*male human Rog4/Enc6, TN*) rarely talks about his past. He appears to be in his late 40's with dark black hair graying at the temples and a thick bushy mustache. He dresses in simple, nondescript clothing and often stares into space as if daydreaming. He fights only to defend himself.

Signs and Symbols: The symbol for the Night Takers is an anchor, often with a closed eye hovering above it. Most of the crew have the mark tattooed on their upper arms as a sign of allegiance, though Cerdenal does not seem to truly care. The *Fugue* runs no flags whatsoever.

Pirates of the Night Takers: Cerdenal's Lot tend to be young, idealistic rogues. Many have Feats such as Clever and Stealthy. He has actually taken on one or two of the more promising and savvy sailors as apprentices, and so a few low-level enchanters or even illusionists might soon be among them.



League of Hydros

The newest threat to merchant ships crossing the Blood Sea between Ghelspad and Termana is the League of Hydros. It is a mysterious band of pirates with enchanted ships that fly rather than sail the waters. The sight of their long boats casting shadows over the waves is most impressive.

What none has discovered is the power behind the League. Thus far no one has managed to capture a pirate of the League. Diviners have been able to discern only that who- or whatever is the source of the flying ships is a most potent wielder of arcane energies. The truth is even more disturbing. While these pirates do plunder gold, jewels and other riches, they seem especially keen on attacking vessels bearing any form of magic. The reason behind this is tied to the master of the League's quest to drain off the dweomers from stolen enchanted objects in the hopes of reconstituting his patron, Mesos.

Vessels: The League's ships are long, slender vessels of strange design. The ships seem best suited to oars but have only long enchanted pennants, almost like long flags that catch the wind. The League has a total of five flying vessels, the largest being the *Sea Drake*. The others are *Windrunner*, *Skychase*, *Coastwing* and *Cloudsurf*. The pirates are armed with heavy crossbows and rain down bolts on targets below. For large prey they open a hatch on the ship's bottom and drop casks of oil, following with *flame arrows* and other fiery spells.

Some of the pennants also convey other powers, such as invisibility, to the ship. Sages and other arcanists have offered large rewards for one of these pennants, but nothing has been forthcoming.

Location: The League is based on the southern end of Thalien. Because of its unique ships, the members do not lair in coves or shallows but on a cliffside that offers protection from attack. They have begun to expand their range of piracy deeper and deeper to the waters southwest of Thalien.

Alignment: The majority of League pirates are chaotic and neutral with a few evil members. Some worship Belsameth, Enkili, or even the titan Lethene.

God-worshippers do not know the truth behind the League or else many would turn against Rostenth.

Allies and Enemies: So far the League has had little dealings with others except for Bloodport. This also has kept the mystery behind them and their ships. When members visit Bloodport, it is to trade and sell and not to carouse with non-Leaguers. The Guild of the Shadow in Mithril has been desperate to discern the hand behind the League and has expended both time and money to capture one of the flying ships but so far has been unable to do so.

Notable Personages: Hyd Rostenth, Master of the League (*male, human Sor7/Bom8, CE*), is the source of this new threat. Rostenth is not unknown in Ghelspad. Nearly every sorcerous society and cabal of wizards knows his name as a supporter of the titans and a man who is utterly ruthless in his efforts to return Mesos to the world. In 121 A.V., he was caught trying to steal very old tomes from the Phylacteric Vault and barely escaped a death sentence only by cutting off his hair and weaving it into a magical garrote that choked a distant guard before returning with the keys. He is wanted in Darakene and the Vesh, and Queen Geleeda of Calastia has also offered a bounty for his capture, though most speculate she wishes to extract Rostenth's knowledge painfully.

Rostenth embarked on a new plan after devising wondrous pennants that would enable the right ship to fly. He gathered a league of ambitious pirates and offered them use of his new ships. In return, the captains turn over whatever magical treasures they



loot to the sorcerer. He then allows his arcane devourer cohort to drain the enchantments in the hope of returning the power back to the titan. So far his scheme has worked, namely because Rostenth has kept his presence secret and the true goal of the League hidden from even those working for him.

Rostenth has a number of levels in the Blessed of Mesos (Bom) prestige class, which can be found in the **Player's Guide to Wizards, Bards and Sorcerers**.

The League's veil of secrecy may soon be shattered all because of one pirate captain's fondness for a woman, a professed daughter of a disgraced ale merchant and a forsaken elf. Berees (*female, half-elf, Brd3/Clr3, CG*) also is more than what she claims. This half-elven beauty is a bold worshipper of Idra who seeks to earn her place among the Courtesans of the goddess by discovering the head of the League. She underestimates the danger involved and may well learn more than she cares to know.

Signs and Symbols: The League's vessels are easily spotted by looking up. Their flags are quite extraordinary and sometimes shift colors and shapes depending on the powers contained within.

Pirates of the League of Hydros: The League is more concerned with loot than mayhem, so more of its members are rogues than warriors or fighters. The captains often have the Magical Aptitude Feat, and high ranks in Appraise are not uncommon. While some have sorcerous abilities, none is too advanced, as Rostenth worries over serious rivals to his control over the League.

Captain Erlick "Bloody Yardarm" Thesk

The crazed man known as Captain Erlick "Bloody Yardarm" Thesk was not always the most infamous pirate stalking the Blood Sea. In his youth he was merely a thug working for the Japhinian Dynasts in the city of Quelsk. He botched an extortion job and was punished by being sold into slavery as an oarsman. Thesk organized an uprising while aboard ship and slew the crew; his fellow slaves elected him captain of the vessel. He sought revenge against his former employers by kidnapping a Dynast sorcerer. Through torture, the half-orc revealed many secrets, including the means to awaken the arcane potential in Thesk's own blood. The Dynast became the first of many to hang from the yardarm of the *Crimson Tide*,

earning Thesk his nickname. Since then, Thesk's notoriety has grown by leaps and bounds. He is the quintessential pirate: bloodthirsty, eager for treasure and skilled at the helm as well as the blade.

Vessels: Thesk's ship, the *Crimson Tide*, was an old Ledeian naval vessel brought to the surface through a pact with an unknown fiend; it supposedly cannot be sunk by mortal means. The *Tide* can hold well over seventy men, all of them cutthroats and scalawags, and is armed with a stern ballista and a fore catapult that can hurl vats of alchemist's fire or flaming pitch. Hanging from both masts is a variety of lines with nooses and metal hooks from which Thesk shows off his grisly work.

Location: Thesk stays within the boundaries of the Blood Sea. Some nobles have conjectured that the *Crimson Tide* cannot sail on pure sea water. This has caused some vessels to race for the edge of the Blood Sea when sighting the *Tide* in the hopes of escape with cargo and lives intact. Thesk holes up on a small unnamed island on the edge of the Archipelago that is often not shown on charts. It is little more than a rocky outcropping. Mutated rooks are known to roost there. The *Tide* prowls the entire Blood Sea for prey.

Alignment: Thoroughly evil. Thesk himself is chaotic evil and his crew varies from lawful to chaotic, but not a man among them is just.

Allies and Enemies: Few who know him care for Thesk. Most are afraid of ending up strung from the *Tide's* yardarm. The Dynasts particularly dislike the pirate, both for the secrets he has stolen and the disruption of some of their more subtle dealings with merchants. The Dynasts refuse to hire outside assassins or adventurers to deal with Thesk, but this may change as the threat of



the pirate captain starts to have more and more impact on the half-orcs' plans. Other rogues who aspire to be Blood Sea pirates often seek out Thesk as a mentor of sorts. Such an apprenticeship is foolhardy, as Thesk's tests of loyalty are deadly.

Notable Personages: Captain Erlick "Bloody Yardarm" Thesk (*male human Rog6/Sor3/Bsp6, CE*) is an intimidating sight. His large build is covered in scars that are glimpsed underneath leather armor. His teeth are filed sharp. His nose is pierced with a fishhook. The front of his head is shaved smooth, leaving the back unruly with red braided locks.

Thesk began wanting nothing more than revenge and then plunder. The thrill of the hunt guided his career. Lately he has been growing bored with easy victories against fat merchant vessels and is considering attacking other pirates, especially Dynast ships. This would only increase the bloodshed in the region and make sailing the Blood Sea even more dangerous.

Thesk is a most dangerous opponent in melee. If he has time, he will hone his axe with his *stone of sharpening* and then right before battle cast *blade thirst* on the weapon (and on those of his crew). Captain Thesk has a number of levels in the Blood Sea pirate (Bsp) prestige class, which can be found in the **Player's Guide to Rangers and Rogues**.

Besides Thesk, two crewmen of note are aboard the *Tide*: Grimline the boatswain (*female half-fiendish brine hag, Rgr4/Bsp2*) and Bitter Caries (*male ghoul*).

Grimline may be the most memorable crewman. Even hunched over, she towers above her shipmates. Her appearance betrays her fiendish heritage, a gangly crone with spiraling horns and crimson-colored hair that's always damp and stringy. Her face, one side of which is scaled, is said to have sunk a thousand ships. Thesk trusts the hag like no other of his crew, mainly because he understands Grimline's motivation: to see that the pirates cause as much mayhem to innocents as possible, especially worshippers of the good gods. Grimline was aboard the ancient ship that rose from the depths to become the *Crimson Tide* and has told others she is the bastard daughter of a demon prince and a captured Page of Manawe.

Bitter Caries is a lacedon (marine ghoul) who was attracted to the *Tide* by the stench of rotten flesh. The ghoul fell under the sway of Thesk but now serves of his own violation, having learned some of the pirate trade. Caries is not interested in plunder but rather his next meal. The hearts of children are his favorite delicacy, and Caries in the past has swum from the ship to a nearby fishing village to fill his gullet with such choice fare.

Signs and Symbols: Thesk never flies a flag, preferring to adorn his ship with victims. All of his crew are expected to drink the tainted waters of the Blood Sea regularly, which leaves its mark on them in

such disfigurements as fingers permanently stained crimson, a loss of body hair and uneven musculature.

Pirates of the Crimson Tide: Thesk takes only murderers as crewmen, so most would be considered rogues and warriors. None can be half-orcs or sorcerers (whom he suspects as Dynast or sea witch spies). They are skilled with Hide and Intimidate as well as Profession (sailor) and often have the Dirty Fighting and Power Attack feats. The more exceptional crewmen will have a level in the Blood Sea pirate prestige class.

Japhinian Dynasts

The half-orcs of the Japhinian Dynasty are not only pirates but also a criminal organization that threatens trade and prosperity well past the shores of Ghelspad. The majority of the Dynasts are rogues and warriors who work both aboard ship and in urban settings. Those who have the Japhinian Dynast prestige class (see the **Player's Guide to Wizards, Bards and Sorcerers**) are the elite in the Dynasty and are captains and powerful contacts in port cities. At the top of the organization is the Patriarch, who oversees all the "family" dealings and protects his "children," resorting to violence when necessary.

The Dynasts operate on two fronts: seaborne and land-based. Those at sea are traditional pirates, raiding merchant ships. These pirates operate their own vessels or sign on with other (usually human) crews and influence their activities to better distract privateers and other naval authorities from the Dynasts. Many an inexperienced sea captain has discovered too late the sea witch he believed he hired is actually a Japhinian posing as one.

On land, the Dynasts run a complicated network of fences, launderers and extortionists. They sell the goods their brethren have stolen at sea to unsuspecting merchants and consumers. They also bully the surrounding sellers to influence prices and competition. Because of this, some cities and towns have begun debating whether to enact edicts prohibiting half-orcs from holding property and running businesses. So far this has yet to happen in large cities, but should such laws pass racial strife may ensue, which the Dynasts would encourage while seeking human pawns.

Vessels: Most Dynast vessels are small and fast. Their crews are nearly always all half-orc with a smattering of humans. The Dynasty is said to possess nearly twenty vessels spread out not only in the Toe Islands but also hidden away in coves along the shorelines of Ghelspad. The Patriarch sails aboard the *Fortune* only, a refitted yacht from Shelzar that is pulled on gold chains by two *charmed* Blood Sea mutated dire sharks.

Location: The Japhinian Dynasty is involved with illegal trade on both Ghelspad and, to a lesser

extant, Termana. In every major port it has influence through a network. The leaders of the Dynasts themselves do not have a headquarters other than the Patriarch's ship. Instead, each pirate vessel hides its identity through petty magic and slips in at dark to small ports with sympathetic traders and rogues. They purchase and steal new supplies and set sail soon after.

At sea, these pirates stick to the major trading lanes. The Dynasts rarely attack small vessels unless they have uncovered a special cargo worth the effort. Instead, their contacts leak information about what each ship holds and so the attacks are coordinated, sometimes including two or more Dynast ships.

Alignment: Most Dynasts are neutral or chaotic evil. The all have a code of ethics that rewards familial piety (loyalty to family and father, both blood and Patriarch) above all else.

Allies and Enemies: Beyond their network, the Japhinians have few allies. Some tribes of orcs in eastern Ghelspad on occasion will hire on as mercenaries for inland raids. A few sorcerers will trade arcane secrets with them. Most merchant houses fear the Dynasts and would do anything to see the "family" destroyed. The church of Manawe considers them parasites and is more than willing to provide equipment and provisions for those who would stop them.

Notable Personages: Dumidian Fenn, Patriarch of the Japhinian Dynasts (*male half-orc, Rog5/Sor5/Jdy10, CE*), commands attention wherever he goes. His wide girth has led many to believe he is a devotee of Gaurak, but Fenn's allegiance is only to himself

and the Dynasts. He considers the powers of gods and titans to be like the elements: useful tools in acquiring personal gain, ones that should be used only by those smart enough to avoid drowning in them. Fenn is well over seventy years, having inherited the mantle of Patriarch quite a while back when his uncle was slain trying to use a slarecian device discovered in a shipwreck's remains. Fenn is far more cautious than his predecessor, and any who wish to meet the Patriarch face to face must brave the dangers of the Blood Sea to do so. That said, they will find Fenn most hospitable. It is said that Asuras has graced Fenn's villa twice, two equal worshippers of avarice having conversation and mocking the whimsies of youth. But beneath the congenial exterior is a temper that is fearful to see. Woe to any who anger the Patriarch, for his reach is longer than most and few can outrun his wrath.

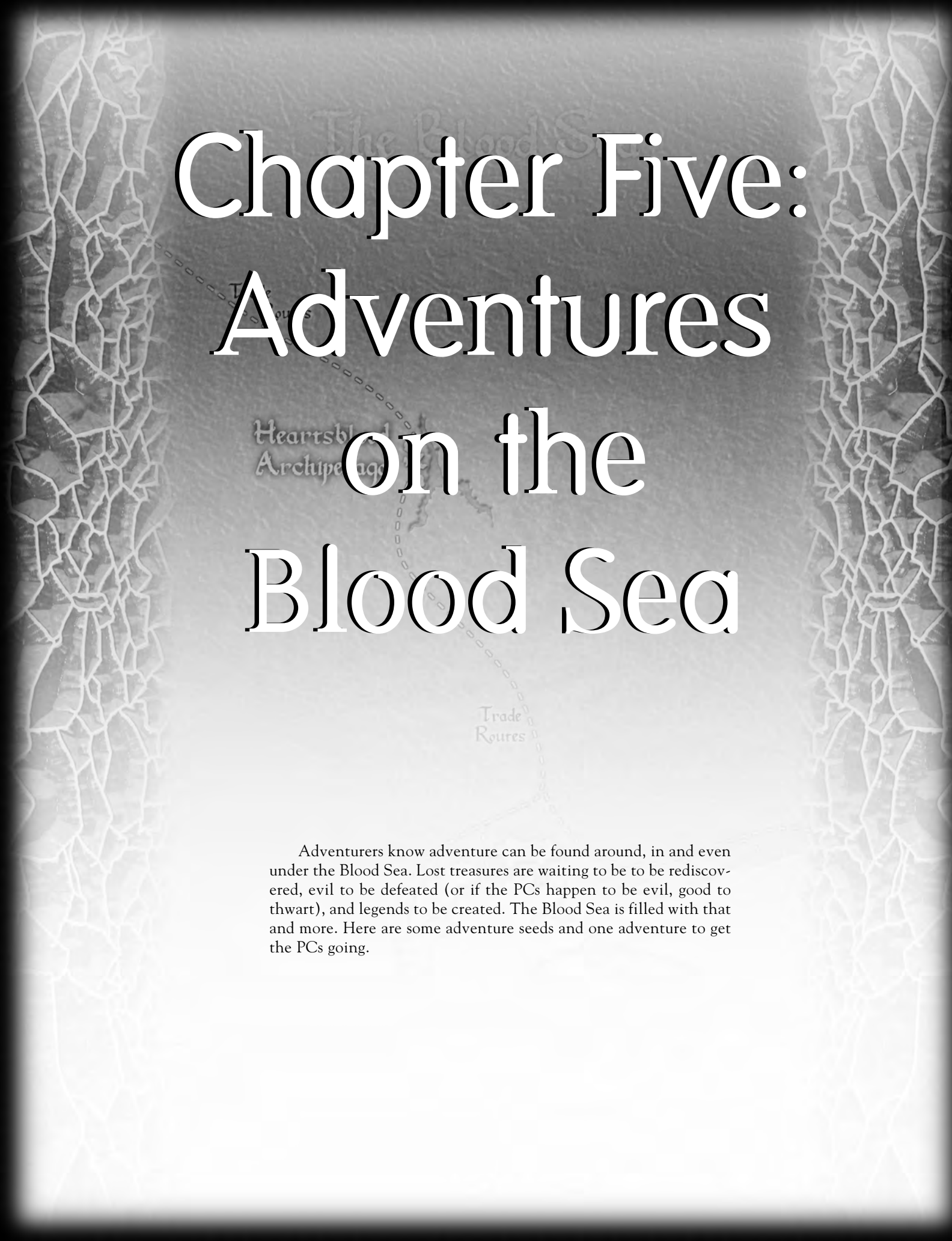
Fenn has a number of levels in the Japhinian Dynast (Jdy) prestige class, which can be found in the **Player's Guide to Wizards, Bards and Sorcerers**.

Tinx is Fenn's familiar. As with most water mephitis, this ugly creature stinking of raw fish and always dripping wet is mischievous, and enjoys annoying the Patriarch's bodyguards the most. If not for the link between master and servant, Tinx would have been killed a long time ago. As it is, most Dynasts refer to the familiar as "that walking bit of bait" and wait for the day when they can strike.

Signs and Symbols: The Japhinians fly flags with an old rune used by the ancient dynasty. Beneath the rune is often a secondary mark that each sea captain adds. Some examples of these secondary markings include a skull, a curved sword and a drop of blood.

Pirates of Japhinian Dynasty: As mentioned earlier, most Dynast pirates are half-orcs. Many have either Endurance or Iron Will to withstand the rigors of the Blood Sea. Those who serve the "family" on land would do well to have ranks in Appraise and Intimidate and perhaps the Deceitful or Well Connected feats in their dealings with other criminals and merchants.





Chapter Five: Adventures on the Blood Sea

Adventurers know adventure can be found around, in and even under the Blood Sea. Lost treasures are waiting to be rediscovered, evil to be defeated (or if the PCs happen to be evil, good to thwart), and legends to be created. The Blood Sea is filled with that and more. Here are some adventure seeds and one adventure to get the PCs going.

The Bodyguards: The adventurers are taking a well deserved rest when word reaches them of a ship needing some bodyguards for an expedition to the Blood Sea. This can consist of a simple guarding of some treasure to an undisclosed destination, or perhaps it's something more sinister?

Couriers of the Blood Sea: A high-ranking noble in Mithril is dying from a mysterious malady. All efforts by the noble's family to cure this illness have failed, but word has come of a potion created by an alchemist that can cure the debilitating malady. The adventurers are offered a hefty sum of gold to travel over the Blood Sea to give the payment to the alchemist for the potion. On the way back, they are faced with a terrible storm, and perhaps something even more dangerous under the waters. Can they make it back in time, or will it be too late?

Relic Hunters: Rumors are heard of treasure to be found in a remote location in the Blood Sea, one item of which is a powerful artifact. A noble has charged the adventurers to see if the rumor is true, and if so, to find the treasure.

Drowning: A pair of red pisceans has been coming on shore and pillaging a local village. The adventurers have been offered a sizable reward to prevent this from happening again. The group may have to use their wits as well as brute force to stop this powerful duo, who are drowning their kidnapped victims under the mistaken belief that the waters of the Blood Sea can create more of their kind.

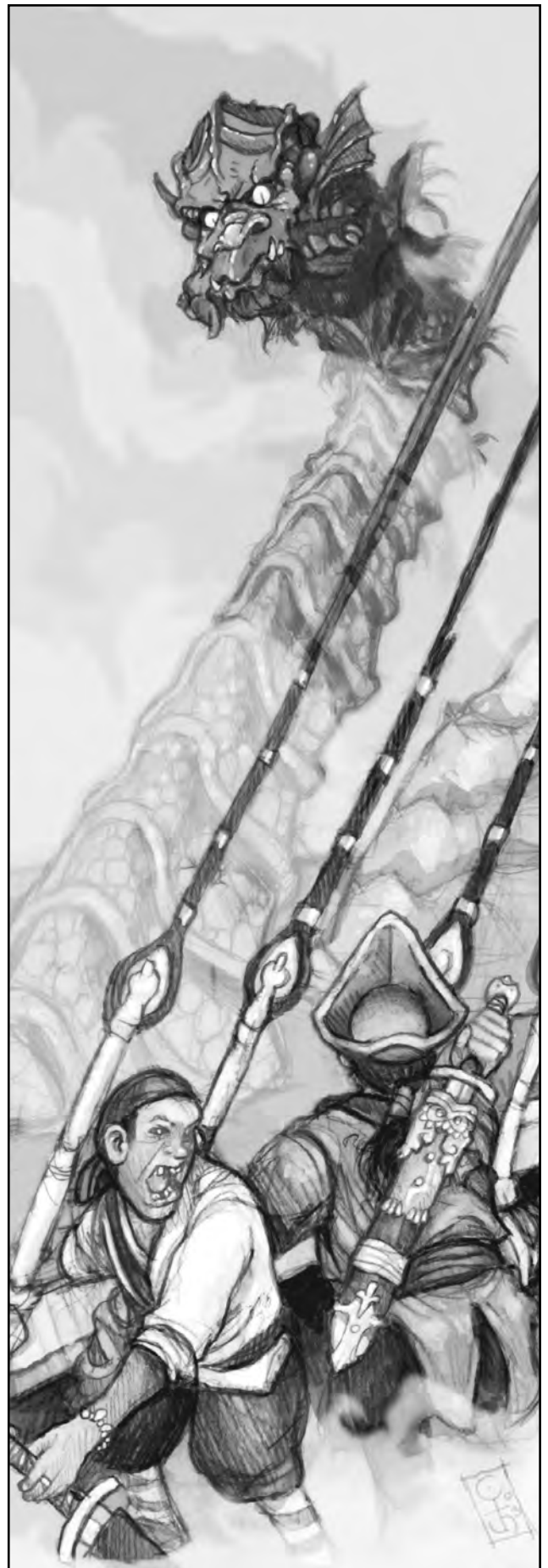
Salvaging the Wreckage: The adventurers have been hired by a salvage crew to recover important items from a wrecked sea vessel. On the way, they receive word that members of the Carnival of Tears are in the vicinity. Even if they manage to avoid or defeat this encounter, they still must deal with the reason why the ship was wrecked in the first place... a collection party of 6–12 green pisceans with their leader (of 8 HD).

Stop, or I'll Negotiate!: A dragon turtle has taken up residence in a large area of the Blood Sea and demands tribute for every ship that passes. The turtle sees the adventurers as people of obvious power and asks them for a favor as their tribute. Can the adventurers come to an agreeable resolution, or will they negotiate with violence?

Dragon Turtle: CR 9; Huge Dragon (Aquatic); HD 12d12+60 (Dragon); hp 138; Init +0; Spd 20, Swim 30; AC 20; Atk +18 base melee, +10 base ranged; +18/+13 (4d6+8, Bite; 2d8+4, 2 Claws); SA: breath weapon (Su), snatch (Ex), capsize (Ex); SQ: scent (Ex), immunity: fire (Ex), immunity: sleep (Ex), immunity: paralysis (Ex), keen senses (Ex); AL N; SV Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +9; STR 27, DEX 10, CON 21, INT 12, WIS 13, CHA 12.

Skills: Hide +7, Intimidate +16, Intuit Direction +10, Listen +18, Search +16, Spot +18.

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Power Attack.



Raising Hell — Part 2: Land Ho! Or at Least the Dead

This is an adventure for PCs of levels 4–6. The adventurers, for one reason or another, are pirates. This means lots of opportunity for plundering, swashbuckling and more plundering! Perhaps they are the Robin Hoods of the seas — giving to the poor after robbing from the rich — or they could be the bloodthirsty pirates of old, taking from the rich *and* the poor alike! It's important they are on a ship, whether they own one or work on someone else's, as long as they have their "sea legs."

This campaign is a series of chapters outlining the adventurers' quest to retrieve a magic item before one of their rivals can get to it. If they succeed, they will be rewarded with lots of gold, or perhaps a chance to redeem their pirating ways. That is, unless they decide to keep the item for themselves, but that's an entirely different matter altogether.

Part 1: The Proposal

The adventurers have been summoned to a small merchant's guild in Bloodport. They have been offered a sum of 100 gold pieces per adventurer just to show up for this appointment.

Fight the Zombie Hordes

Should the party accept the summons, they will find themselves approached for a job. The merchants have found the location of a business ledger of great worth to merchants but little value to others, and wish to hire the adventurers to retrieve it. They warn the group that time is of the essence, as a crew of pirates has been rumored to be around the location and may desire the ledger to hold as ransom.

The group will be paid a hefty sum of money, along with the promise of the guild to use their connections to "wipe the slate clean" of any warrants against the adventurers, should any be acquired during their career. If they accept, they are given a map to the location of the ledger. Upon returning to their ship, they are attacked by bloated humanoids of decomposing flesh — blood zombies! These undead are shambling over to the adventurers' ship and will warp the wood, rendering it useless, unless they can be stopped.

Blood Zombie: Medium CR 1; Medium Undead; HD 2d12+3 (Undead); hp 16; Init -1; Spd 30, swim 30; AC 11; Atk +1 base melee, +0 base ranged; +1 (1d6+1, Slam); SA: wood bane (Su); SQ: undead, single actions only (Ex), rage (Ex); AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 13, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.
Feats: Toughness.

The map leads the adventurers to an island. Depending on the severity of the journey and the encounter(s), they may be pressed for time. When they reach shore, they discover they are not alone, as the competition has also reached land.

The encounter can be a friendly rivalry (unlikely), or combat could result from the meeting (more likely). Below are possible characters who can impede the adventurers' progress.

The Bloody Eye

Torg: male half-orc Ftr5; CR 4; Medium humanoid (6'8"); HD 5d10+10 (fighter); hp 46; Init +5; Spd 20; AC 22 (+1 Dex, +8 armor, +2 shield, +1 cloak); Atk +11 melee (1d10+6, masterwork bastard sword), +9 ranged (1d8+3, +3 mighty composite longbow); SQ: darkvision (Ex); AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +4, Jump +4.

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword).

Languages: Common, Orc.

Possessions: +3 mighty composite longbow, masterwork bastard sword, full plate, heavy steel shield, arrows (x20), *potion of endurance* (x3), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (x3), *cloak of resistance* +1.

Tersoal: male human Wiz6; CR 5; Medium humanoid (5'10"); HD 6d4+6; hp 24; Init +6; Spd 30; AC 13 (+2 Dex, +1 bracers); Atk +3 melee (1d6, quarterstaff); +6 ranged (1d8, masterwork light crossbow); AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Alchemy +6, Concentration +9, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (War) +10, Spellcraft +12.

Feats: Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Toughness.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Elvish, Orc.

Possessions: Dagger, quarterstaff, masterwork light crossbow, crossbow bolts (x10), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (x3), *scroll of improved invisibility* (x7), *potion of alter self* (x3), *bracers of armor* +1, *cloak of resistance* +1, *wand of summon monster II* (25 charges).

Spells Known (Wiz 4/3/3/2): 0-lvl — *acid splash*, *detect magic* (x2), *filch**; 1st — *arrow charm**, *mage armor*, *sleep*; 2nd — *levitate*, *Mel's acid arrow*, *swift water**; 3rd — *dispel magic*, *pressure sphere**. (Spells marked with an asterisk are from **Relics & Rituals**.)

Tersoal's Familiar: animal, hawk; CR 1/3; Tiny animal; HD 1d8 (animal); hp 12; Init +3; Spd 30, 10, fly, average 60; AC 15; Atk +5 (1d4-2, Claws); AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 6, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +11, Listen +6, Spot +6.

Feats: Weapon Finesse.

Part 4: The Return Home

Having defeated the rivals for the ledger, the adventurers might be tempted to keep it and barter for a higher reward. The merchant's guild, of course, will not be happy to hear of this and instead will put out a bounty on the adventurers' heads. Such is the life of a pirate....

Voyage of Mercy

We survived the storm with no losses, though Ruye was pale and sickly from the tossing. Captain Tamas estimated the storm blew us a bit south and then north, as far as he could reckon.

Thank Corean for the strength and vigor he bestows on his chosen. While it is more commonly remarked on for surviving the deadly effluvia of fell beasts, being untouched by seasickness is a boon I grew to appreciate on the voyage.

I was first aloft when the storm cleared, searching from the rigging for signs. I spotted smoke, resolving to a large volcanic plume from a vast bowl, perhaps a league across, partially filled with the reddened sea.

Repairs were minor. A few belaying pins had cracked before we had taken down the sails. However, the sails themselves were fine. Soon they were unfurled and we headed northeast. We needed to head south, but the captain stated we needed a strong current, and those he knew would be found only further north.

It was another few days, headed northeast, and a squall tore into us. We could not get the sails secured before they were torn, and damage was extensive. Several men died, including Ruye. I last saw him clutching desperately to the ship mast as wave after wave bulled over the deck, and soon he was lost to the tumbling whiteness.

We were sinking, but again I took to the rigging, hoping against hope. And then I saw it... three islands in the distance, to the east. I called down.

It was slow going, working with the least damaged sails and some patchwork that barely held, but finally we made the shallows of the largest island. It was the island furthest south, the smallest island a short distance north of it, and then a slightly larger island north and west of that one.

The island we grounded on was ringed by reef, with a sandbar almost inviting, a road leading inward. It was a surprisingly calm and sober procession as we unloaded our gear from the sinking ship.

It has been a year now, and I send this, with hope that, if Corean wills it, someone may read this account. I serve Corean, protecting those marooned with me. My greatest hope is that they may find their way home. They do not deserve this fate.

— Selections from Joban Reyensson's letter

Lost at Sea — An Introduction

Many dangers and brooding observers are in the Blood Sea. Sailors on its red waters are a hardy breed — perhaps foolish, but devoted or bound to their trade. The Blood Sea offers many potential treasures and discoveries for those who would brave it.

Not a few ships sailing these routes are lost without a trace.

Authorities in Mithril have received a letter in a bottle from Joban Reyensson, a paladin lost at sea six years before. It contains a record of his final journey and a plea for aid — not for himself, of course, but for the crew stranded with him.

While Joban was not a high-ranking paladin, his friend Nijo Ruby (*male human Pal8, LG*), a former colleague of his, paid for scrying attempts. These have unfortunately failed; he is either dead or screened by the influence of the Blood Sea. A *divination* attempt yielded the message “Joban's words may lead you to him, but only through great peril.”

Nijo's duties prevent him from looking for Joban himself, as he has been specifically ordered to stay in Mithril. This does not prevent him from seeking someone else to do his looking for him, which is where the party comes in.

Adventure Design

Voyage of Mercy is suitable for a group around levels 5–6. Several factors can adjust this somewhat. Paladins are immune to many of the persistent threats in and around the Blood Sea, such as blood fever. Clerics capable of removing taint from food or other crew are extremely useful. A sea witch and characters familiar with sailing are not strictly necessary but will certainly come in handy.

Ultimately a GM must take some care to moderate encounters depending on the actions of the party. Some groups tend to find trouble even in the most unlikely of places. Others have a knack for managing to miss entire adventures. In both cases material can be scaled back or added in to keep the challenge rewarding.

The GM should be particularly careful with encounters in the deep Blood Sea. It is possible to come across Kadum's leviathan — at CR 15, way beyond the capabilities of a 5th-level party. In these cases the GM can simply have these creatures pass without incident — a reminder that vast forces are at home in the deep.

The pacing of this adventure is aimed at a somewhat quiet journey interrupted by dramatic events. Players interested in more roleplaying may want to draw out the “between” scenes, enjoying

the escape of the open ocean and interacting with ship crew. Others want fast-paced action at all times. Appealing to each is a matter of dwelling on or brushing over the quiet interludes. At least some of the experience of travel should be conveyed to provide a backdrop to events.

Starting Out

The simplest starting point is if members of the party are paladins or otherwise affiliated with Mithril. Heroic characters may also learn of Nijo's interest through clerics or mercenary groups. Nijo is not offering much — 50 gp per person up front if he believes the group is trustworthy, 200 gp per person if they return with substantive news, and 500 gp per person if they return with Joban (living or dead).

Alternatively, the party could be involved in some other matter and happen across Joban's letters or the island he is on. This works best if the group has a ship already and has been traveling the Blood Sea for some time. Explorers interested in mysteries of the pisceans or wishing to help the merfolk could also become involved in this adventure.

Preparations

The next step is travel arrangements. Procuring a vessel is no easy matter. It is clear that Joban is out at sea, so a substantive ship is necessary. An alternative is to pay for accommodations aboard a merchant vessel. Unfortunately, the heroes would have little say on navigation but might be able to pay their way by offering protection.

If the group is dealing with Nijo it is possible that he can arrange a vessel. He can scrounge up a dilapidated longship or sailing ship (see the *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 7, "Goods and Services," Transport) and give it to the party at half price. The heroes can get similar deals elsewhere. In either case, it will require 1d3 weeks of hard work to put the ship in decent sailing condition — an opportunity to adventure in Mithril.

The next step is finding a crew. This may be a good opportunity for a hero to use Leadership to gather sailors as followers. Hirelings cost 1 sp per day per sailor, though may be taken as followers later if need be. A crew is not particularly loyal — if boarded by pirates most would surrender rather than fight.

Finally, the ship needs supplies. Simple food and fresh water worth at least 1 sp per day per person is required, though crew will have to fish to supplement their diet or suffer slow starvation. This food takes up 1 lb. per meal. At 3 sp per meal the crew needs to fish only occasionally and the meals are merely bland. These meals take up 2 lbs. per meal. Good meals, at 5 sp per, are rare without

magic to keep them from spoiling. These also take up 2 lbs. per meal.

Good meals will go bad within a week or two. Common or simple meals can be procured that last a month. After this time disease and health problems can occur from eating food that has been nibbled on by rats and insects. Scurvy and other diseases due to lack of fresh fruit or vegetables also begin to afflict the crew. A cleric is vital to maintaining the health of a ship crew over long distances.

Longships have a crew of 50, requiring 1,500–3,000 lbs. of provisions, at a cost of 150–750 gp. Sailing ships have crews of 20, requiring 600–1,200 lbs. of provisions costing 60–300 gp.

The heroes will have to pull their weight if they are sailing on another's ship. It is also a good idea if they perform duties on their own ships — this entitles them to count toward the crew requirement of a ship. Otherwise they are extra passengers.

It is important to supply adequately. Journeys south from Mithril often stop at Hedrad for provisioning. Other landing points allow ships to have fewer stores — a good thing, as most aren't big enough to hold vast amounts of food or keep food fresh.

The route between Mithril and Hedrad is about 1,000 miles. Daily speed is typically hourly speed x18 — full speed half the day and half speed for the rest. This speed will drop to about x12 during storms.

Some islands are southwest of Hedrad, about 250 miles. Many ships resupply there before heading south 500 miles and then across the border of the Blood Sea toward Termana roughly 2,000 miles away.

Hedrad to North Crilos is 2,500 miles more directly, but few prefer to save even a month of journey by passing through the central Blood Sea.

A flow of wind and current goes from Termana to Ghelspad along the southern edge of the Blood Sea and in the opposite direction through the middle of the Blood Sea. Each adds about 1 mile per hour to speed in that direction — or subtracts it, if the ship is headed in the opposite direction. Most ships forgo the beneficial Ghelspad-Termana currents, preferring to head against the wind than risk the central Blood Sea.

Where To?

Before the ship heads out the first problem is where to go. Nijo has transcribed copies of Joban's letters for the heroes but is of marginal help himself. He knows Joban traveled aboard a sailing ship, the *Essential Principle*, a merchant vessel bound for Karsian in Termana. Joban was sent

both to help protect the ship and as a courier for documents on his return trip. These documents related to administrative matters in Azale and were resent with another paladin years ago.

One option is that Joban included a rough position of the volcano, the last good reckoning the captain had, in his letter. The heroes can simply head out once their ship is ready.

Another option is to focus a bit more on investigation. The heroes must track down some good information and educated guesswork to find their target. This also provides a great opportunity for side plots and encounters in the port cities of Ghelspad. Even without a fixed position, it is clear that Joban made it a substantial way into his journey — somewhere between half and three quarters of the way to Termana. Assuming the ship traveled along the usual route — and there is no reason to believe they didn't — the *Essential Principle* had passed well beyond the Border Archipelago.

A DC 25 Gather Information check in the Harbor City of Mithril will uncover useful information. One of the older sailors, in his cups, remembers passing a submerged volcanic island about a thousand miles west of the Border Archipelago, but only his ship captain knows any navigation information.

The ship captain will gladly hand over latitude and estimated longitude of the volcanic island — for a price. He'll ask for 20 gp if he thinks the heroes are suckers, but will take 5 gp if pressed.

If the heroes do not own their ship it may take some convincing to convince a ship captain to veer off-course — particularly to trace the path of a doomed vessel six years gone. Paying for the ship's provisions or offering other services such as skilled healing is likely to be persuasive. This ship will also be loaded with goods for Termana. Going almost all the way to Termana and then turning back would be quite difficult.

This also applies even if the heroes own their own ship. Traveling an extra 500–1,000 miles is better than turning around and traveling another 1,500–2,000 before resupplying. Filling the ship with cargo offers potential profits — buying 200 gp per ton of goods and making a profit of 100 gp per ton once in Termana. This profit is 1d20 gp per ton when traveling to Mithril.

When To Go?

It would be a bad idea for the heroes to travel in the spring. Every sailor will tell them so. Bloodwinds and blood storms are common, and people stay indoors as much as possible. Since it has been six years, they have no huge rush to leave immediately.

A month or two of downtime might be useful. If the heroes have been running themselves ragged, some time to copy spells or recuperate may be just the thing. Alternatively the GM might run some adventures in Mithril while the party waits for the weather to improve.

The Voyage Begins

Finally the heroes are off. From Mithril, the first stop is likely to be Hedrad if laden with trade goods, possibly the islands to the south otherwise. Pirates may attack, particularly near the Toe Islands. Unless the ship hugs the coast — which can be dangerous rounding the Celestial Shelf — the danger of pisceans is also present. If encountered the heroes are best off simply paying tribute and continuing on their way. Any sailor aboard will stress that paying tribute would be the wisest course — and are likely to mutiny if the heroes prepare to do otherwise.

Hedrad is an additional source for more information and another possible starting point for this adventure. Unless the heroes have contacts among Hedradan clergy they are unlikely to get in touch with knowledgeable officials with any speed. Templars manning Hedrad Landing are dutiful but have no worthwhile information.

The Unseen District is more fruitful, though it has its own dangers. Talking to sailors in this area requires three days of effort and a DC 25 Gather Information check. If successful, the heroes encounter Devri the Bent (*male human Exp5, NE*). If the heroes show wealth or excessive interest in the subject of three islands near a volcano, Devri will attempt to feel out what price the information is worth and whether a treasure is involved. He may decide he should be a crew member of the heroes. If they agree, he is a skilled sailor, but a troublemaker and gambler.

Otherwise, Devri will mention that he knows the location well and gab about it. He and his crew went off course two years back, saw both the volcano and then the three islands, but made no landing. It was memorable because three days later a giant squid attacked the ship and half the crew was lost — he found the sight of three islands and then three days passing before the attack portentous. Treated properly he will refer the group to the ship captain, Lord Amis (*male human Ari3/Exp6, LN*).

A hero of breeding, distinction or political clout in Hedrad can easily arrange a visit to Lord Amis. Otherwise a DC 15 Diplomacy check is required. This can be retried once every 1d4 days. He will provide his best reckoning of the location of the three islands for a nominal 1 gp fee. If the topic comes up, he will relay common knowledge

Roll	Event
1	Bad food — 1d20 x 5% of the remaining food stores have become inedible, due to rats or other vermin. The spoiled food must be dumped overboard before it contaminates the rest, and then the vermin problem handled. Lastly is the little problem of what to eat when the food runs out.
2	Blood fish — While fishing one of the crew pulls up something nasty. Treat as a blood-tainted Medium shark. This could be amusing or sobering, depending on how things play out.
3	Blood fever — Half of the crew come down with blood fever. The heroes must both keep the rest of the crew calm and care for the sick. Meanwhile it may be difficult to run the ship.
4	Favorable current — The ship arrives in a favorable current, increasing speed. The current holds for 2d10 hours and cuts a day off travel time.
5	Favorable winds — Favorable winds speed sailing ships along for 2d4 hours, cutting a day off travel time.
6	Green island — An island large enough to host vegetation comes into view. This could be a great place to find fresh water and fresh food. This can take a rather significant amount of time. Basic provisions are gathered at 2 pounds per person per hour, common provisions at 1 pound per person per hour, and good provisions at 1 pound per person per 4 hours. Blood Sea island encounters apply. Roll d%. After that many searches are made, further provisions take twice as long to find. This is cumulative, so if a 10 is rolled 10 pounds of common provisions are found in an hour each, a further 10 take 2 hours each, and 10 more provisions take 4 hours each.
7	Pod of whales — A few whales breach in the distance. The crew tenses, ready for some monstrous attack. Nothing happens — the whales pace the ship for an hour or so, then move off. If attacked, the whales quickly dive out of harm's way.
8	Unfavorable current — The ship hits unfavorable currents for 2d10 hours. If the ship remains in the current a day is added to travel time. The navigator can attempt to escape the current with a DC 20 Profession (sailor) check. The attempt — successful or not — requires the navigator to get a fix on the ship's location.
9	Unfavorable winds — Winds shift, making sailing difficult. A day is added to the ship's journey.
10	Rocky island — A small rocky island comes into view. It is covered with seabirds but otherwise unremarkable. There is a 20% chance that the island is of sufficient size to provide some good fishing and shelter from storms. A DC 15 Profession (sailor) check finds a spot where storms are effectively downgraded one severity level in their effects on the ship.
11	Wave weather — Unusual bands of red clouds form, looking like waves. This is taken as a dire omen.
12	Wreckage — The ship passes shallows upon which sit the remnants of a ship's hull. The wreck has been there a while, and no survivors are evident. Any storms that hit add 10 to the ship damage roll due to the chance of running aground. A sinking ship will drop 10 x 1d4–1 feet before hitting the seabed.

about the Blood Sea — including that humans found on islands are almost always corrupted by Kadum's blood. Told that Joban is a paladin, he will mildly suggest that the rest of the crew were not.

With some clout and breeding, a group that misses Devri or otherwise focuses on the elite of Hedrad has a good chance of finding Lord Amis. A DC 20 Gather Information check every 1d3 days allows an appropriate character to send word round to Lord Amis, who will then approach and provide the location. The price of this will typically be some social favor, such as an invitation to a party or attending a public debate.

Events

A number of situations could develop during the voyage. Weather should be checked — it is a big factor in ship encounters. While these are presented as random table entries, the GM may certainly add them in whenever she wishes. Roll 1d12 and consult the following.

Something Nasty

It had eyes all along it, three mouths, and screeched like torn metal! It was horrible. I can't forget the sewer smell as we cut into its rubbery shape, or the white hot pain as its teeth shredded my arm....

Nasty Blood Sea Critter: CR 2; SZ Medium aberration (aquatic); HD 3d10+6; hp 23; Init +6; Spd 15 ft., Swim 60 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +5/+3 melee (1d8+2, bite, 1d6+1, 2 claws); Face/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA slimy; SQ air breathing, blindsense, blood fever carrier, blood rage, clawed tentacles, damage reduction 5/piercing, fearless, keen scent, rage; AL chaotic evil; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 4.

Skills: Listen +6, Spot +6, Swim +9.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Multiattack.

Special Attacks: Slimy (opponent has –4 on any grapple checks or any checks to escape the critter's grapple).

Special Qualities: Air breathing (takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage every 10 minutes out of water for an hour, then 1d6 points of lethal damage every 10 minutes thereafter), clawed tentacles (extra claw attacks).

The Island

Eventually the ship will reach the volcanic seamount. Approaching too close is dangerous, thanks to poisonous gases that spew into the air. Lacking a strong indication of where the three islands are, the ship will need to wander the waters within a day's travel. The crew has a 10% chance per day that the three islands are within sight, but it requires a DC 20 Spot check to find them. *Scrying* or *teleport* may work at this range, if the heroes have such ability.

If within five days the crew has not spotted the three islands, a conjured squall kicks up and blows them toward the islands. Normal squall damage occurs; the ship will not run aground. It may be damaged severely anyway.

The main island is protected by a coral reef. The water within is almost blue — light violet, at any rate. The island is large, and much of it is hidden in thick foliage. The one easy entrance is a sandbar that intersects the reef and extends a short distance past like a ramp. The wreckage of the *Essential Principle* can be seen below the waterline.

Three important inhabitants live on the island, which is roughly a mile by 3/4 of a mile.

Coral Reef

The first is the most innocuous. The reef ringing the island is infested with a Blood Sea mutated coral (CR 8). It covers 1,000 square feet, giving it Intelligence 12. It has the spell-like ability to *cause fear* at will, and fast healing 1.

The coral intelligence — born roughly 50 years ago — has learned much about the ways of the divine races. It understands ship trade and events on land, albeit from a limited perspective. Part of its goals has been to maintain a population of humans. Unfortunately the island is too small to sustain more than a few dozen humans, even with the aid of the coral. This has been possible by diverting ships with the aid of controlled humans, to replenish the stock as old age and starvation take their toll.

While most of the humans have been made into coral hosts or — later — coralline skeletons, the coral has found it useful to keep some free from its influence. Instead of killing Joban, who is immune to infection, it has been careful to arrange matters to appear somewhat normal to him. He has helped keep the other humans alive and provides a soothing presence to new arrivals. Others are kept untouched mainly to observe their normal behavior and learn how to avoid scrutiny.

The coral's new plan is to try to have the humans "rescued." Ideally, coral hosts can board a

Sailor Reborn, Coralline Skeleton: CR 2; SZ Medium undead; HD 1d12; hp 6; Init +5; Spd 20 ft., Swim 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural); Atk +1 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws); Face/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA parasite, spell-like ability; SQ damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, darkvision 60 ft., drift current, fast healing 1, immunity to cold, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 13, Con —, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 3.

Skills: Move Silently +2.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

Special Attacks: Parasite (after a successful bite or claw attack the victim must make a DC 11 Fortitude check or become a coral host), spell-like ability (*cause fear* 1/day).

Special Qualities: Drift current (moves through water unencumbered).

ship and sail to some new land — with coralline skeletons attached below the hull to improve the odds. While the coral does not derive any direct benefit from new coral mutants far afield, this is a matter of biological urge rather than intellect.

The coral is served by 30 Medium coralline skeletons. These are distributed all throughout the island, and mostly follow the reef's orders. They share the reef's Blood Sea mutated abilities. The sea life nearby, primarily manta rays, sharks and octopi, all lack the hard skeletons that would enable the reef to expand more easily. While the skeletons can swim, they lack the size, intelligence and aquatic nature to find their way across the sea.

The lizardfolk who dwell on the other side of the island are a distinct annoyance. The coral had almost taken them over in the past, but they learned to cure the coral infection. Obliterating the lizardfolk would require more resources than the coral can afford and likely expose its deception to the uninfected humans on the island. For now, it simply keeps tabs on the lizardfolk and helps the human settlement resist any attacks.

Lizardfolk

A colony of 40 blood-tainted lizardfolk and their 20 children live on the other side of the island. They occasionally swim to the other islands, but neither of the other two are sufficiently large to live on.

The community is well secured. Each of the six leaders heads a group of five warriors who patrol the far shore. Lairs are woven of fronds that extend out into the water. Basket fish-traps and other underwater structures ring the settlement.

Flakhas hates the humans on the island and knows what dominates them. Past conflicts have infected some of her people, but she has learned to cast *remove disease* — selectively, so as not to disrupt the valuable blood taint.

Flakhas

A leader of the local lizardfolk, Flakhas is a proud, strongly built specimen with lustrous green scales tinged faintly violet. Strange suckers line her arms and body, a trait common to the local lizardfolk, and her natural claws have grown into long, wickedly sharp daggers. While the lure of Kadum's blood can easily drive her into fits of rage, she is primarily occupied with the survival of her people. She has no animal companions, as few natural animals escape the water's taint. Flakhas may take the form of a shark or octopus to check out various threats but mostly remains in her native form. Spells prepared will change to suit circumstances, such as preparing *quench* if she knows an enemy is likely to conjure fire elementals. *Warp wood* is potentially quite threatening to an enemy's ship.

Flakhas, Brood Mother: female blood-tainted lizardfolk, Drd6; CR 8; SZ Medium aberration (6' 8" tall); HD 8d10+24; hp 66; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (-1 Dex, +7 natural, +1 amulet); Atk +8/+6 melee (1d8+3, 2 claws, 1d8+1 bite); Face/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA leap attack, long claws, suckers; SQ amphibious, blood fever carrier, blood rage, fearless, rage; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 16, Dex 8, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 10.

Skills: Balance +6, Heal +9, Jump +10, Knowledge (nature) +6, Spot +9, Survival +9, Swim +11.

Feats: Craft Wondrous Items, Multiattack, Natural Spell.

Languages: Aquan, Ledeane.

Special Attacks: Leap attack (30 ft. charge and full attack), long claws (upgraded die of claw damage), suckers (+4 to grapple).

Special Qualities: Amphibious (breath underwater indefinitely), blood fever carrier (see Appendix, Blood-tainted template), blood rage (DC 12 Will save to resist becoming enraged near blood, DC 15 if blood is from enemy), rage (+4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and -2 AC after taking damage, but must kill opponent).

Possessions: Amulet of natural armor +1, periapt of health (which keeps her safe from infection by the coral reef).

Spells Prepared (5/4/4/3): 0-lvl — detect magic (x3), light, purify food and drink; 1st — cure light wounds (x3), entangle; 2nd — barkskin, bull's strength, lesser restoration, resist energy, warp wood; 3rd — greater magic fang, remove disease, speak with plants.

Frlkepep, Khokhas and Vrlilk

These three adepts provide some spiritual leadership. Khokhas is the second mother, daughter of Flakhas, but lacking her mother's power. The other two are husbands to Khokhas, and together they provide valuable magical support to the community.

Khokhas, Frlkepep, Vrlilk, Wise Leaders: female/male/male blood-tainted lizardfolk, Adp3; CR 4; SZ Medium aberration (6' 3"); HD 2d10+4 plus 3d8+6; hp 38/32/34; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (-1 Dex, +7 natural, +1 amulet); Atk +3/+1 melee (1d6+1, 2 claws, 1d8, bite); Face/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA acidic spittle, poison spittle; SQ amphibious, blood fever carrier, blood rage, fearless, rage; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 7, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills: Balance +6, Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Jump +8, Swim +9.

Feats: Brew Potion, Multiaction.

Languages: Aquan, Ledeane.

Special Attacks: Poison spittle (ranged touch attack out to 10 feet, DC 14 contact poison doing 1d3 damage initially to Dex, and 2d6 secondary damage to Dex).

Special Qualities: Amphibious (breath underwater indefinitely), blood fever carrier (see Appendix, Blood-tainted template), blood rage (DC 12 Will save to resist becoming enraged near blood, DC 15 if blood is from enemy), rage (+4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and -2 AC after taking damage, but must kill opponent).

Possessions (for each): Cloak of resistance +1, potion of cure light wounds (x10), potion of magic fang (x10), potion of barkskin +2 (x2).

Spells Prepared (3/3): 0-lvl — detect magic, ghost sound, mending; 1st — bless, burning hands, sleep.

She now gives the humans wide berth, unwilling to risk a full attack. Her hope is that the humans will die off faster than shipwrecks can replace them, leaving the island to her and her children. She realizes this result would leave her a target for the coral reef, but that is a concern for later.

Flakhas is served by two Blood Sea mutant giant octopi (use default from **Creature Collection II**). These keep an eye on things for her. They also move about inland to check on the humans.

Humans

A village is within view of the "ramp" from the sea. People may be spotted line or spear fishing if the weather has cleared. They will appear friendly and welcome the visitors. If the ship is in good shape, they will offer thanks and relief at being rescued.

Warrior Leaders

These six large lizardfolk are the strongest and fiercest of their brood. They chafe under the domination of Flakhas and believe a warrior should lead. Few attempts have been made, and fewer lucky enough to survive the fight.

War Leaders (6): male lizardfolk, War3; CR 4; SZ Medium aberrations (7' 1"); HD 5d10+10; hp 39; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+7 natural, +1 amulet, +1 bracers); Atk +7/+5 melee (1d8+3, 2 claws, 1d8+1, bite); Face/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA leap attack, long claws; SQ amphibious, blood fever carrier, blood rage, fearless, rage; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Balance +5, Intimidate +2, Jump +9, Swim +9.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Multiaction.

Languages: Aquan, Ledean.

Special Attacks: Leap attack (30 ft. charge and full attack), long claws (upgraded die of claw damage).

Special Qualities: Amphibious (breath underwater indefinitely), blood fever carrier (see Appendix, Blood-tainted template), blood rage (DC 12 Will save to resist becoming enraged near blood, DC 15 if blood is from enemy), rage (+4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and -2 AC after taking damage, but must kill opponent).

Possessions: Amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +1, potion of bull's strength, potion of cat's grace, potion of cure moderate wounds (x2), potion of greater magic fang +1, potion of invisibility.

Children

The 20 children are watched by the various mothers. Flakhas in particular has been waiting for someone to train in her sacred art, carefully balancing the need to have a successor and the danger of training a potential rival.

Children (20): blood-tainted lizardfolk; CR 1; Small aberration (3' 6"); HD 1d10+1; hp 7; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural armor); Atk +0 melee (1d6, 2 claws or 1d4 bite); Face/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA suckers; SQ amphibious, blood fever carrier, blood rage, fearless, rage; AL ; SV Fort +X, Ref +x, Will +x; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 8

Skills: Balance +5, Jump +6, Swim +6.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

Languages: Aquan.

Special Attacks: Suckers (+4 to grapple).

Special Qualities: Amphibious (breath underwater indefinitely), blood fever carrier (see Appendix, Blood-tainted template), blood rage (DC 12 Will save to resist becoming enraged near blood, DC 15 if blood is from enemy), rage (+4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and -2 AC after taking damage, but must kill opponent).

Warriors

These male and female lizardfolk make up the majority of the brood.

Warrior (30): blood-tainted Lizardfolk, War1; CR 3; SZ Medium aberration (6' 5"); HD 3d10+6; hp 23; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+7 natural, +1 amulet); Atk +4 melee (1d6+2, 2 claws); Face/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA suckers; SQ amphibious, blood fever carrier, blood rage, fearless, rage; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 8

Skills: Balance +5, Climb +3, Jump +8, Swim +8.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Multiaction.

Languages: Aquan, Ledean.

Special Attacks: Suckers (+4 to grapple).

Special Qualities: Amphibious (breath underwater indefinitely), blood fever carrier (see Appendix, Blood Tainted template), blood rage (DC 12 Will save to resist becoming enraged near blood, DC 15 if blood is from enemy), rage (+4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and -2 AC after taking damage, but must kill opponent).

Possessions: Amulet of natural armor +1, cloak of resistance +1, potion of cure light wounds (x2), potion of magic fang (x2).

Qraqphsh and Shlphshp

These two Blood Sea mutant giant octopi are loyal to Flakhas, as she feeds them well and makes few demands. The two do not like one another much so are unlikely to act together.

Qraqphsh and Shlphshp: Blood Sea mutant giant octopi; CR 9; SZ Large aberration (Aquatic); HD 8d10+16; hp 60; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 20 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +7 natural); Atk +11/+6 melee (1d4+6, 8 tentacle rakes, 1d8+3 bite); Face/Reach 5 ft./10 ft.; SA constrict, improved grab, spell-like ability; SQ air breathing, cold and fire resistance 10, ink cloud, jet; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 22, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 3.

Skills: Hide +11, Listen +4, Spot +4.

Feats: Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Aquan.

Special Attacks: Constrict (a Blood Sea mutant giant octopus inflicts 2d8+7 points of damage with a successful grapple check against Medium or smaller creatures), spell-like ability (3/day, *chill touch* as an 8th-level sorcerer at DC 7).

Special Qualities: Air breathing (can stay out of the water without penalty for 1d4 hours, after which it must return or die); ink cloud (can emit a 20-foot cube of jet-black ink once per minute as a free action, providing total concealment; creatures within the cloud suffer effects of total darkness), jet (can jet backward once per round as a double move action, at a speed of 200 feet).

Coral hosts

Markun is the informal leader of this band of coral hosts, most of whom are sailors. They come from a variety of backgrounds, from Mithril to Calastia, and a number of crew from ports in Termana. Markun is in his early thirties. The others consist of 17 men and two women.

Markun: blood-tainted coral host human, Exp4; CR 5; SZ Medium aberration; HD 4d8; hp 18; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural); Atk +4 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger); Face/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA electrical touch, parasite; SQ amphibious, blood fever carrier, blood rage, fearless, natural armor, rage, reef unity, regeneration 5/energy or acid; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills: Appraise +2, Balance +3, Bluff +8, Diplomacy +10, Listen +5, Profession (sailor) +5, Sense motive +9, Spot +5, Survival +4, Swim +4.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Endurance, Negotiator.

Languages: Ledean.

Special Attacks: Electrical touch (+1d6 electrical damage with unarmed attacks), parasite (infest target with coral larvae with a successful bite attack, DC 11 Fort save to resist).

Special Qualities: Amphibious (breath underwater indefinitely), blood fever carrier (see Appendix, Blood-tainted template), blood rage (DC 12 Will save to resist becoming enraged near blood, DC 15 if blood is from enemy), natural armor (+2 in addition to normal blood taint benefit), rage (+4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and -2 AC after taking damage, but must kill opponent).

Possessions: +1 dagger, ring of sustenance. He has a rare mithril and diamond helm that has a faint enchantment but has no idea what it does. The enchantment merely helps protect the piece and keep it clean, and it is worth 500 gp as

a work of fine art. He also has 50 gp, 500 sp and a large emerald worth 200 gp. He is secretive about his treasures and plans on hitching a ride on any visiting ships, below the waterline, if need be. The ring would allow him to minimize the risks of slipping free of the ship while sleeping.

Coral Host (19): blood-tainted coral host human, Exp2; CR 3; SZ Medium aberration; HD 2d8+3; hp 12; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural); Atk +2 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger, or 1d6+1, +1 club); Face/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA electrical touch, parasite; SQ amphibious, blood fever carrier, blood rage, fearless, natural armor, rage, reef unity, regeneration 5/energy or acid; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills: Appraise +2, Balance +4, Bluff +6, Climb +3, Jump +3, Listen +4, Profession (sailor) +2, Spot +4, Survival +1, Swim +3, Use Rope +4.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Persuasive.

Languages: Ledean.

Special Attacks: Electrical touch (+1d6 electrical damage with unarmed attacks), parasite (infest target with coral larvae with a successful bite attack, DC 11 Fort save to resist).

Special Qualities: Amphibious (breath underwater indefinitely), blood fever carrier (see Appendix, Blood-tainted template), blood rage (DC 12 Will save to resist becoming enraged near blood, DC 15 if blood is from enemy), natural armor (+2 in addition to normal blood taint benefit), rage (+4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and -2 AC after taking damage, but must kill opponent).

Possessions: +1 dagger or club, plus 50 gold, 200 silver and 5 gems worth roughly 50 gp each. These are stashed in homes but not too covertly. No one has anywhere to spend the treasure they've gleaned from wrecks.

Azabeth

Hailing originally from Delis, her well born family had fled to Hedrad to escape the fallout from some political matters. An assassin cleaned up, however, killing most of the family before she fled. Azabeth booked passage for herself and her infant daughter to Termana, figuring the distance would cool any interest in hunting her down. She laments the wild and unruly nature of her daughter, more a savage than a proper young lady. Azabeth has a faint suspicion that something is not quite right with many of her fellow islanders but intuits that it would be best to keep these thoughts to herself. She has a 2-year-old son by Phenol Roduye but has refused to tell any of the other islanders who the father is. She is fiercely protective of her daughter and son and will stop at absolutely nothing for their safety. She is in her late 30's and, despite the absence of servants and cosmetics, quite fetching.

Azabeth, Mother of Terebeth: female human, Ari1/Exp3; CR 3; SZ Medium humanoid (5' 3"); HD 4d8; hp 18; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +1 melee (1d4-1, dagger); Face/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Appraise +4, Bluff +8, Craft (calligraphy) +3, Craft (carpentry) +4, Craft (gemcutting) +3, Craft (weaving) +6, Diplomacy +7, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Listen +3, Perform (singing) +3, Profession (jeweler) +3, Sense Motive +10, Spot +3.

Feats: Alertness, Negotiator, Persuasive.

Languages: Calastian, Ledean.

Possessions: Bag of holding type I, 500 gp, 1,000 sp, and 25 emeralds and rubies worth an average of 160 gp each. She keeps all but 100 gp hidden in the bag of holding. She has planned that if rescued such treasure will provide a vital starting point for her and her daughter.

Phenol the Svelte

A charmingly disreputable sort, Phenol's life of mild larceny took a dramatic turn. Being marooned far from civilization has removed the point of much of his efforts. He found that his skills translate fairly well, particularly in keeping an eye out for lizardfolk patrols and stealing eggs from various nesting birds. He is well liked by most, including Joban, Azabeth and even Markun and many of the coral hosts. He is vaguely aware that something is strange with the coral hosts but has attributed it to the madness of isolation.

Phenol Roduye, Congenial Rogue: male human, Rog5; CR 5; SZ Medium humanoid (5' 6"); HD 5d6; hp 22; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+1 Dex, +1 amulet, +5 chain shirt, +1 ring); Atk +4 melee (1d6-1, short sword); Face/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA sneak attack; SQ evasion, trap sense +1, trapfinding, uncanny dodge; AL NG; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 12

Skills: Appraise +2, Balance +2, Bluff +5, Climb +3, Decipher Script +2, Diplomacy +3,

Disable Device +1, Disguise +3, Escape Artist +3, Forgery +1, Gather Information +2, Hide +6, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (local) +1, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Open Lock +3, Perform (juggling) +4, Search +5, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +5, Spot +5, Swim +1, Tumble +6, Use Magic Device +2, Use Rope +2.

Feats: Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Ledean.

Special Attacks: Sneak attack (+3d6).

Special Qualities: Evasion, trap sense +1, trapfinding, uncanny dodge.

Possessions: Amulet of natural armor +1, +1 chain shirt, ring of protection +1, 100 gp, 400 sp, and two unfinished opals each as big as a doubled fist that, once properly worked (DC 15 Craft (gemcutting) check) will be worth 1,500 gp each. While he may be convinced to part with his treasure, he will be very reluctant to give up his equipment.

Joban Reyensson

Joban has become the leader of the island, despite some troubles on occasion with a few of the others. For the most part, this leadership consists of organizing work on shelter and food gathering. While he patrols near the encampment, Joban has found it difficult to find vigilant individuals to form a watch.

Joban does not trust many of the people he is marooned with. Nearly all are evil of some kind, that he knows, though he has grown to respect Azabeth. She works hard to support the community and keep the peace, though her unforgiving and harsh nature has occasionally led to altercations. Joban has, to his surprise, developed a deep attachment to Phenol. While clearly a no-account thief, Phenol's ebullient nature and kindness to others have been a relief from the gnawing of despair in the island community.

Joban Reyensson, Island Leader: male human, Pal7; CR 7; SZ Medium humanoid (6' 4"); HD 7d10+7; hp 50; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (-1 Dex, +9 full plate, +1 amulet, +1 ring); Atk +10/+5 melee (2d6+4, +1 greatsword); Face/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA smite evil; SQ aura of courage, aura of good, detect evil, divine grace, divine health, lay on hands, remove disease, special mount, turn undead; ALLG; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 15, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills: Craft (weaponsmithing) +3, Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +5, Heal +11, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +1, Knowledge (religion) +5, Ride +1, Sense Motive +4.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Power Attack.

Languages: Ledean.

Special Attacks: Smite evil (2/day).

Special Qualities: Lay on hands (can heal up to 14 points per day), remove disease (1/week), special mount (currently absent until he gains another level).

Possessions: Amulet of natural armor +1, +1 full plate, ring of protection +1, +1 greatsword, an intricately engraved and bejeweled chest worth 500 gp filled with several artifacts made of mithril worth another 1,000 gp and another 500 gp of large gems. He will be protective of this chest. Assuming the heroes do not extort Joban and the others, however, this chest will be a large part of what Joban will use to repay them.

Spells Prepared (2): 1st — cure light wounds, divine favor.

Noncombatants

The islanders have five children. Azabeth has Jayen, a 2-year-old son, and Terebeth, a 10-year-old daughter. Two other women are on the island, Arya and Pows. Arya is the mother of the other three children, aged one, two, and four years. These children are not coral hosts — at least not yet.

Terebeth, 10-year-old scamp: *female human Exp1, CG* — AC 12; 7 hp; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +2; *Skills:* Profession (fisher) +4, Spot +5.

Lowan of Thistleton, aging merchant: *male human Exp2, N* — AC 10; 9 hp; SV Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +4; *Skills:* Appraise +5, Bluff +5, Craft (bookbinding) +5, Diplomacy +5, Forgery +5, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +5, Sense Motive +5.

Twenty of the humans are coral hosts. Among them is Markun, something like a leader for the sailors on the island. He also attempts to lead the other coral hosts, though this is at best a limited rule.

Eleven uninfected humans are here: Azabeth and her two children, Arya and her three children, Pows, Phenol Roduye, Lowan of Thistleton and Joban Reyensson. Joban is currently without a mount due to combat in the past year.

Joban is the de facto leader — the captain died of a shark attack a year ago. The coral hosts are a combination of former crew members and other survivors of the two shipwrecks since. The village is split between factions. The sailors have been talking of taking over a ship or even trying to build rafts. Joban is sure Corean will send help.

Azabeth, Terebeth and five of the coral hosts are visibly on Joban's side. Markun, Lowan and ten of the coral hosts are on the "sailor" side. The rest are noncommittal, while Phenol plays both sides.

Though the coral hosts actually have another agenda, their division is not entirely an act. The coral reef is their parent and communicates with them but does not dominate them. The coral hosts agree — for the most part — with the reef's plans, but they have their own ideas on how to put them in motion. The coral hosts and reef argue telepathically on and off, while carefully screening their behavior from the untouched humans.

The coral hosts are additionally careful to keep their blood taint hidden from Joban, lest they be "healed." In some situations coral hosts have had their coral infestation destroyed. Often the host willingly became reinfected. The unwilling were killed or infected anyway.

The hosts will initially avoid infecting potential rescuers. The risk of discovery would be too great.

Welcoming

The heroes are most likely to encounter the humans first. While a paladin might discover that many of the inhabitants are evil, not all are. The coral hosts are also prepared with a defense, honed by suspicions of Joban and others over the years. Markun, a merchant's son turned sailor, will chide suspicious heroes, noting that the exigencies of marooned life try the moral fiber of even the most noble spirit and other similarly florid turns of phrase.

The village will do its best to welcome the new arrivals. If their ship is damaged the people's enthusiasm will be a bit muted, but an intact vessel will be met with great joy. Azabeth and Terebeth will be eager to leave, but the sailors will explain to them that provisions for such a large group will take time — plus any needed repairs.

Options

The heroes will be warned about the lizardfolk at the other end of the island. Assuming the heroes are not in a bad state, Joban will broach the subject of wiping out the lizardfolk. His worry is that anyone else wrecking on this island will be prey to these creatures.

The villagers have a vague idea of the disposition of the lizardfolk and roughly where they are. A direct attack is clearly not a good idea. Traps or picking off isolated patrols might work; the lizardfolk are also reluctant to attack their enemy in force.

If the heroes embark on destroying the lizardfolk several options are possible. Patrols are composed of a war leader (or, rarely, one of the wise leaders) and five warriors, an EL of 8. The heroes can easily gather four to five islanders to help. Joban will reluctantly stay in the village — he is concerned that the lizardfolk will strike if sufficiently roused. Joban is willing to take up a position a short distance from the village, if the heroes wish to try to draw a patrol into an ambush.

It is likely that patrols will group into larger parties, particularly if some of their number have been killed. These larger groups could be EL 10 or more. The heroes will have the advantage of ambush and the aid of villagers. One possible approach is to draw away a lizardfolk war party and attack the lizardfolk lairs, facing Flakhas, an adept, and two warrior leaders (EL 10). If one of Flakhas' octopi is nearby (a rough 10% chance), this combat could get messy (EL 11–12).

Lizardfolk Treasure

While they have little use for the gold and gems found in shipwrecks, the lizardfolk enjoy the beauty of these treasures. The following can be found in the sprawl of huts and dug-in lairs that make up their home.

Gold bars	A shipment of gold in 200 gp bars sank a few years past. The lizardfolk have recovered 50 of the bars and use them in a primitive sauna to help warm their eggs.
Gold coins	10,000 gp are scattered throughout the lairs, again valued for their heat-conductive properties as a cold or warmed bed.
Silver coins	Another 20,000 sp are used as bangles and decoration throughout the lairs. Many are tied into long strips that chime musically in the wind. A few enterprising lizardfolk have shaped these into strips and other shapes to enhance this musical quality.
Mithril orrery	In Flakhas' lair is her most valued possession, an elegant orrery made of mithril, shaped with extraordinary precision. Though she does not have a firm grasp of its function, she has a basic idea of its link to the heavens. The 50 lb. device, which has a faint divination aura, is worth 10,000 gp and provides +10 enhancement bonus on Knowledge (astrology) checks. Ignorant of the device's true function, the orrery is worth 2,000 gp simply due to its fine construction and materials.

Plot Twists

It is possible that a highly paranoid group of heroes may attempt to sail around the island first, to get a lay of the land. At this point they will likely spot the lizardfolk along the shore. Lizardfolk patrols will avoid the humans, poking their heads up in the distance and watching the ship's progress.

While parlay is fairly unlikely, a sufficiently persuasive or aggressive approach could convince Flakhas to meet with these humans. She will tell the heroes what is going on, including the danger of the coral reef. At this point the reef will send 12 Medium coralline skeletons to break up the little soirée. The lizardfolk have only half their number to defend with.

A valiant battle at Flakhas' side will convince her that it would be wise to help these humans. The heroes are offered intelligence, at which point it will become clear that the "bearded man who occasionally wears shiny metal" may be Joban.

Meanwhile, Joban has been told that some of the villagers saw a ship of demons disembark near the lizardfolk community and then saw "humans" traveling with a lizardfolk patrol. The coral hosts hope to kill off the lizardfolk and the humans so they can take the ship. Coralline skeletons and coral hosts will attempt to board while the other parties are drawn into separate conflicts.

If the ship is taken, it will depart and the heroes will have a new problem on their hands.

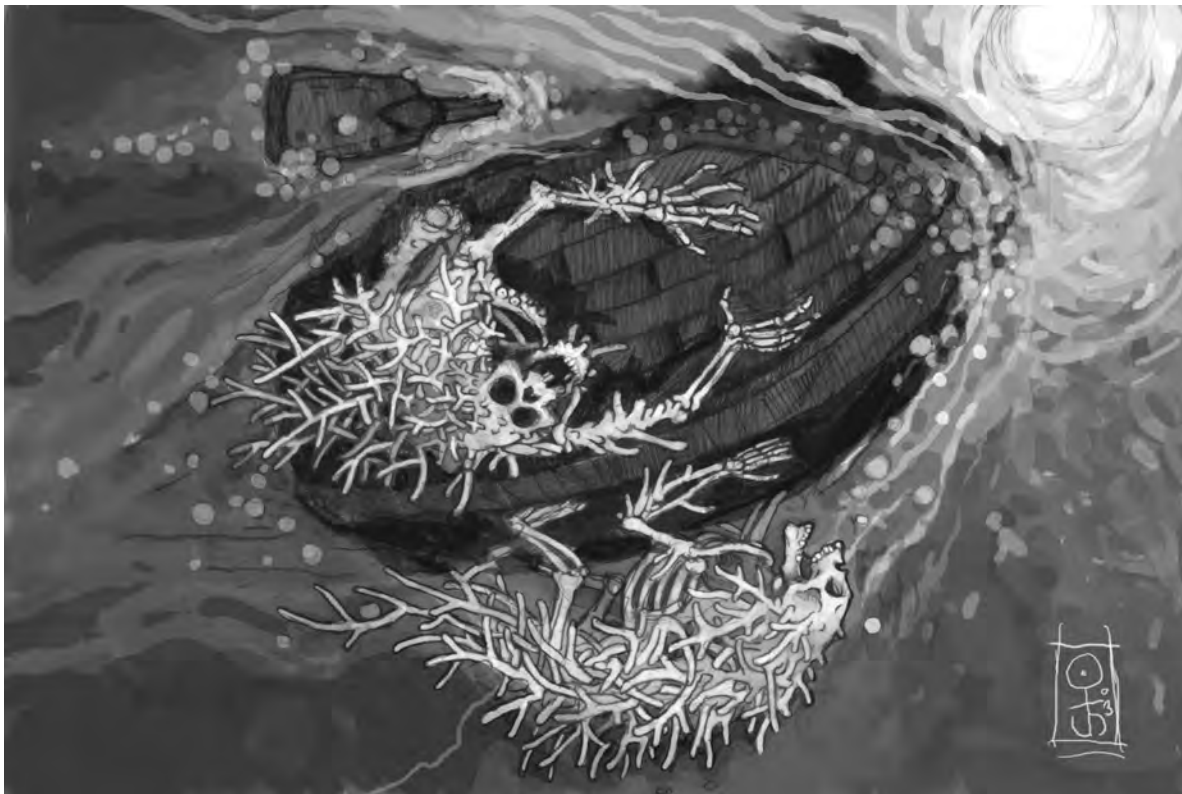
Return to Civilization

Assuming the heroes discover the ruse of the coral reef and manage to escape, with or without Joban, the remainder of the trip is relatively uneventful — barring the odd Blood Sea mutant giant squid, of course. During cleaning of the ship hull coralline skeletons might be spotted, requiring further combat (3 Medium skeletons, EL 6). Another difficulty is provisions for the extra passengers. Stops at other islands may be necessary — if the ship is lucky enough to spot them.

If the coral hosts are loaded onto the vessel, the heroes are sailing with a menace. The coral hosts will agree to cleaning duty below the water to prevent fellow crew from noticing the coralline skeletons. It is possible someone will hear the occasional skitter of something along the ship hull (DC 30 Listen check, as the sound is hard to make out with the normal groan of ship timbers and jostle of equipment).

One possible revelation of the coral secret is a random attack by denizens of the Blood Sea. In the chaos of battle the coral hosts may use some of their unusual abilities. Additionally, if someone inspects a coral host killed during such an encounter the unusually overgrown bone may be spotted with a DC 25 Spot check. Actively looking over a body allows a Dc 20 Search check or DC 15 Heal check to spot the strange growths.

Other possibilities include magic or suspicion. After one month of observation a DC 25 Sense Motive check will give a hero the distinct impression that something is unnatural about the way the coral hosts move and act.



If confronted the coral hosts will attempt to fend off suspicions as foolish. *Charm monster* and more solid evidence will compel the coral hosts to switch plans. They will attack all the uninfected crew, killing any paladins or particularly dangerous characters they can, possibly by simply attempting to toss them overboard.

The heroes will have the help of Joban and the crew, but such a situation could turn dire. If all 20 coral hosts have survived this far into the trip, that adds up to an EL of 12. A more appropriate threat to a party in this adventure is EL 9. To that end, a GM may have any coral hosts in excess turn on one another in a sudden bid for supremacy, using coralline skeletons to further rip one another to shreds.

Arriving at Termana with the coral hosts will be quite bad. The coral hosts will all simply jump off the ship and out of sight, swimming away to find new homes. The coralline skeletons will do likewise, though likely with no one even knowing of them.

Months later, rumors of a new threat will occasionally drift out of Termana — strange growths found in isolated shoals.

Joban, if he has been rescued, will politely request a trip back to Mithril. He has nothing to offer in Termana and will make no promises. If the heroes refuse, he will smile, disappointed, and seek other passage.

Rewards

The village has lots of coins, gems and other valuables recovered from wrecks over the years. While they are happy to be rescued, each person hopes to gain something out of the absence. If pressed, villagers will give up much of their treasure, intent on various issues of survival. Joban will offer a minimal reward, believing that he has no legal or moral obligation to do so. If the heroes behave with honor and kindness, however, and return him to Mithril, he will offer them 10,000 gp. If the heroes refuse the reward, he will do everything in his power to proclaim the great works of the heroes in Mithril — benefits that will, over time, be worth at least 50,000 gp in further work, purchases at cost and so forth.

Discovery of the nature of coral hosts and Blood Sea mutant reefs will be worth $1d10 \times 100$ gp in Hedrad, Mithril and Karsian. A DC 15 Gather Information check will double this, with another multiple per 5 whole points above 15.

If the heroes have been responsible for bringing the coral to Termana a chance exists that somebody will someday discover their responsibility. The heroes may find some tough questions and recriminations should this come to light.

Tweaking the Adventure

The threats of this adventure can be moderated in several easy ways. The greatest tool is the decisions of the characters involved. If the lizardfolk work with greater focus and in larger groups, their threat is significantly greater. The two Blood Sea mutant giant octopi could, particularly in combination with Flakhas and the leaders of the lizardfolk, provide a challenge even for 12th-level or higher parties. Adding a second lizardfolk leader like Flakhas, more giant octopi or other monsters can expand the danger. Larger coralline skeletons, perhaps those of whales and other monsters, could pose more significant threats. A band of pisceans nearby could be curious about the commotion — or perhaps they have something to do with the coral reef.

The adventure can be made quicker by brushing over details, such as the ship travel. As nearly all of the NPCs in this scenario have been infected with Kadum's blood, they are all easily enraged and stirred into disorganized madness. A party of lower level can, either by intent or accident, face the threats in smaller, more easily overcome pieces.

The actions and strategies of the players will have a large impact on threat. Direct aggressive approaches to the adventure will generally result in large messes. It may be useful to play up the divisiveness of the threats because the players have created higher threat levels.

The Blood Sea

Appendix

Trade Routes
Heartsblood Archipelago

Trade Routes

Deep under those bloody waves dwell things you and I can't even imagine, lad. But the dangers don't ever stay there. Oh, no. At any time, you might find some beasty or other come slithering up out of its reaches, looking to add your blood to the old Mountainshaker's in the waters. But mark my words — the worst dangers are from those who look to use the Blood Sea as a source of power. Those are the ones to truly beware of, my boy.

— The fisherman Brinn to his son

Mundane Considerations

Distances

For simplicity the measures used in this supplement are all in units we are familiar with on land. Those wishing a bit more verisimilitude in their nautical adventures can adopt some of the following terms.

Directions

The bow is the very front of the ship. The direction toward the front is fore. Moving toward the bow is to go forward. The stern is the very back of the ship. The direction toward the back is aft. Moving toward the stern is to go aft.

Everything to the right of a ship is starboard and everything to the left is port or larboard. To move in either direction is to go athwartships. Descending into the ship is to go below, while coming up to the deck is to go topside. Moving up into the rigging is to go aloft.

Nautical Mile

A nautical mile is defined as one minute of latitude. This is useful at sea where, barring frequent use of magic, latitude can be calculated accurately with instruments. A nautical mile is roughly equal to 1.1508 miles.

League

Originally, a league was the distance a man could walk in a day. It was adopted by the Ledeian Empire and spread throughout Ghelspad. A league started out at 1.4 miles but grew over time. Eventually it was defined as 3 miles. The term is now primarily used at sea, where it is defined as 3 nautical miles.

Knot

Speed aboard a sailing ship is typically measured by casting the log from the stern. This is a piece of wood tied to a rope attached to a reel. The wood is relatively motionless. Knots are tied in the rope at 47-foot 3-inch intervals. A 28-second hourglass is used to time the operation and then the knots are counted to determine speed. A knot is 1 nautical mile per hour.

Dead Reckoning

Essentially this is navigation by plotting courses on a map. The navigator uses the ship's last known position (fix), then plots the expected course at a given interval according to compass and speed. Celestial observations are crucial for correcting for drift and other variables.

Ties of Blood

Characters with some form of taint can weave Kadum's blood into spells in different ways. In this case blood taint is considered a creature with the Blood Sea mutant or blood-tainted template, or which is normally described as created by Kadum's blood, such as black pisceans and grotesques. These spells normally require some quantity of Kadum's blood to be used as a focus or material component. This blood must be fairly concentrated — not the normal ambient amounts.

Blood Scrying

Sorcerers and druids of the aquatic races may use gobbets of congealed blood from Kadum to enhance their scrying. A sorcerer will apply the thick material to a scrying mirror, while a druid will refine the blood into a reddish translucent sphere.

This treatment allows a character who is tainted (having the Blood Sea mutant or blood-tainted template, or otherwise affected by Kadum's blood, such as a black piscean) to gain certain advantages — and some disadvantages.

The Spell Save DC to resist the scry spell is increased by +2 if the target is likewise tainted.

Scrying may be accomplished through clouds or pools of blood, such as that shed by some living creature (not including Kadum's ever-present blood). The blood must be fresh, at least fresh enough to be still wet or reasonably concentrated. A constant source of blood, such as that leaving a slowly dying animal, is a valid target. The familiarity of the general location determines scrying difficulty; the caster treats a location similar to familiarity. If no fresh blood is available in the location the spell simply fails. This may apply to locations inland.

The caster cannot target creatures with absolutely no blood taint. Most characters in and around the Blood Sea have some degree of taint, unless they purify everything they eat and drink with magic and avoid all contact with tainted water. The big exception is paladins, whose divine immunity to disease protects them from low-level contamination.

The caster must be careful not to scry too closely to Kadum or creatures within gore trenches. These concentrated areas of his power are too much for mortal spells. In each case the scrying instrument begins to ooze with pure blood and the caster is affected as if targeted by a *slay living* spell. The save DC is 15 for gore trenches and 25 for Kadum. Effective caster level for any SR is 9 for gore trenches and 25 for Kadum. No matter the result the caster is also affected by exposure to pure gore.

Blood Teleport

Tainted spellcasters can incorporate a vial of Kadum's blood, worth about 100 gp on the piscine market. The spell then taps into the essence of Kadum — never a safe thing. For a moment, the caster is tied to Kadum himself, his understanding and the spread of his blood throughout the vast Blood Sea.

The caster may select any location that touches some of Kadum's essence. Even the faint thread of his power flowing freely from a human knifed in some back alley is sufficient.

While the caster is aware of many locations, this knowledge is brief and soon recedes. Only the target the caster intended is selected, but the accurate knowledge is less important. In addition, any other creature that has taint is perceived. A caster could teleport to wherever a specific person is, as long as the location touches an open source of Kadum's blood.

The exposure to a titan's vast power, even for an instant, takes a toll. The caster must make a DC 15 Will saving throw. Success indicates the character is shaken for 2d6 rounds. Failure means the character is stunned for 2d6 rounds and shaken for another 1d6 hours.

Instead of the normal target table the accuracy of teleportation depends on the concentration of Kadum's blood. If a character is targeted, the worse of location and character applies.

Screen of Blood

The flowing power of a titan can interfere with several spells, including *teleport* and *scrying*. This is effective permission for the GM to decide such spells don't work for specific locations or past a certain range, or have penalties to use.

Keep in mind that hampering a party this way should be worth something — perhaps a hazard CR, or a bonus to the effective CR of encounters where these spells would be very useful.

“Gore” indicates a creature with the gore template. “Tainted” may be a creature like a razorfin dolphin or black piscine, or a creature

with the Blood Sea mutant or blood-tainted template. “Affected” applies to most creatures in and around the Blood Sea. Characters with “minimal” taint have either magical protection, are very careful to avoid taint or are new to the area.

Mishap: In addition to normal teleport damage the target location becomes a region thicker in Kadum's blood. A mishap targeting the abyssal floor of the Blood Sea means the characters appears in a gore trench instead. If the Will save to recover from the teleport fails, the caster also takes temporary ability damage to Int, Wis and Cha (1d3 of each).

Blood Sea Contagions

The Blood Sea is a sea of life, from huge leviathans to the smallest creature that swims within its sanguine waters. Such a place is also a breeding ground for contagions and disease. Most of those who dwell along or on the Blood Sea learn to recognize most of the diseases that rise up from its depths.

Blood Fever

Consumption of food contaminated by Kadum's blood or exposure to concentrations of that blood requires a DC 20 Fortitude saving throw or the person suffers the effects of the enhanced disease blood fever. The incubation period is 6d4 hours. When the incubation is complete, the victim takes 1d3 points of temporary Con damage and begins to tremble or convulse and to sweat blood. The victim also suffers hallucinations of violence and death — images from Kadum's memories and the horrors of the Titanswar. The victim must make a DC 18 Will saving throw or experience a change in alignment to chaotic evil for the disease's duration. After this change in alignment, an additional DC 16 Will saving throw must be made each day. If the roll fails, the victim is seized by a homicidal rage and will attack anyone around him. This maddened state persists for the duration of the illness.

Once per day thereafter, the victim must make a successful Fortitude saving throw to

Blood Teleport					
Location	Character	On Target	Off Target	Similar Area	Mishap
Gore trench	Kadum	01–97	98–99	100	—
Abyssal Blood Sea	Gore	01–94	95–97	98–99	100
Central/Shelf Blood Sea	Tainted	01–88	89–94	95–98	99–100
Coastal Blood Sea	Affected	01–76	77–88	89–96	97–100
Wash, inlets	Minimal	01–52	53–76	77–92	93–100
No blood	Untainted	—	—	81–92	93–100

avoid repeated damage. Three successful saving throws in a row indicate that the victim has thrown off the disease and recovered, taking no more damage and returning to his original alignment. Any induced rage also ceases once the victim has recovered.

Anyone coming into physical contact with the victim risks catching the disease, though resisting contraction of blood fever in this manner is a DC 12 Fortitude save.

Over time, repeated bouts of blood fever can lead to horrific changes. Consumption of blood-tainted foods while in the throes of blood fever requires a DC 15 Fortitude saving throw per day to avoid becoming tainted permanently. If the character fails, another DC 15 Fortitude saving throw is made. On a failure the character becomes a grotesque (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**); on a success the character becomes blood-tainted (see the Blood-tainted template below).

Blood Ingestion

Seriously contaminated or concentrated Kadum's blood can cause more severe effects. First, the blood acts as an ingested DC 18 poison, with initial damage of 2d6 Con and secondary damage of 1d6 Con. Those who survive the initial symptoms must then make a DC 16 Fortitude saving throw or be transformed into a Blood Sea mutant (see **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**). Blood Sea mutations can be cured with a *remove disease*, *heal* or *remove curse* spell. Kadum's blood and the concentration of taint in food may be considered both poison and disease for spell purposes.

Equipment

Blood Sea Alchemy

All the below alchemical concoctions require a measure of Kadum's blood as an ingredient. Thus, they are fairly common in the area of the Blood Sea and surrounding coasts and far rarer the further one travels.

Evergreen

Named with no knowledge of the surface-world term it happens to replicate, evergreen is an alchemical substance vital to the piscean undersea cities. It sheds an even, greenish glow, clearly illuminating a 30-foot radius and providing shadowy illumination out to 60 feet.



Evergreen is a slimy thick blue-green sludge created through Craft (alchemy). A day's worth fills a pint jar and costs 5 sp. The substance is normally poured into a spherical glass lamp. The material is good for a week before it goes inert. It can be made in a variety of colors, but creating evergreen in anything but shades of blue-green costs double, and pure white light is impossible.

Evergreen incorporates several living ingredients. When supplied with clean seawater it begins to glow. The amount of light can be adjusted by a sliding shutter in the back of the lamp. When closed, the light slowly dims as the substance goes quiescent. It reduces in light range by 3 feet per round (and shadowy illumination range by 6 feet per round). Opening the shutter brings the light back up with similar speed, though it will light to full brilliance in one round if the container is shaken.

Evergreen lamps cover the major piscine cities, creating almost a sense of starry night along the ocean ridges. Often evergreen is smeared along bridges and other surfaces, creating huge glowing common areas. Evergreen is also used to create words and pictures, generally of a political or religious nature.

Feral Draught

Druidic worshippers of Kadum often create *feral draughts* to feed to their animal companions. Any animal that drinks the draught instantly bristles with rage, gaining a +1 alchemical bonus on attack and damage rolls and a number of additional hit points as though it had gained an additional Hit Die. Because of their anger, animals fed this substance are harder to control (-2 penalty on all *wild empathy*, Handle Animal or Ride checks). The effects last for a number of minutes equal to twice the alchemist's ranks in Craft (alchemy). Foolish alchemists who have sought more ferocious guard dogs have often found themselves running for their lives when their faithful animals turn on them. The draughts do not work on magical beasts or Blood Sea mutants. (DC 25 Craft (alchemy) check; 500 gp/dose)

Tincture of Ire

A distillation of blood in alcohol, the *tincture of ire* causes any to drink it to experience a rush of bitter anger and resentment (DC 15 Will save to resist). Individuals under the influence of the tincture gain a +2 alchemical bonus on all Will saves against enchantment effects, including the *fascinate* ability of bards. The drinker's attitude worsens (see NPC attitudes in the *Player's Handbook*) to the next less

favorable reaction. The effects last for an hour. Petty rogues often spike bar patron's drinks with this substance, hoping to cause a brawl and use the ensuing mayhem to distract notice from their misdeeds. (DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check; 100 gp/dose)

Magic Items

Many are the magic items that have been inspired by the Blood Sea, whether they embody its powers, inhibit them or simply permit the user to survive its bloody waters.

Brumous

Description: *Brumous* weapons were designed for the infamous Hand of the Blade, a band of five duelists that sought a magical edge to their swordplay. They hired a mage, whose name has long since been forgotten, to enchant a number of rapiers and dirks with the power to leak smoke to conceal them from a foe. For a while, the Hand were undefeatable as combatants until they foolishly began to squabble among themselves for the hand of the Succubus Queen Lysondraa. Their blades have turned up now and then, inspiring contemporary mages to work similar enchantments.

Powers: When hefted, this weapon spreads mist or smoke from the very tip or along the edge. The wielder gains the benefit of one-half concealment against opponents but is not hindered in any way by the mist. The color and smell of the wisps rising off a *brumous* weapon is at the discretion of the creator, though any harsh stench will not cause additional penalties to opponents.

Faint evocation; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *obscuring mist*; Price: +1 bonus.

Floating

Description: The sea witch Merelda devised *floating* weapons as a reward for the more loyal members of her pirate crew. When her ship was blown well off course and some of the men threatened mutiny, an enraged Merelda purposely sank the vessel. Only those with these weapons survived. Since then, several have fallen into new hands.

Powers: A weapon with the *floating* special ability never sinks in any liquid. Such weapons can indefinitely support the weight of any unencumbered creature that is of the appropriate size to wield it or smaller. Normally, this quality is given to items frequently used by sailors and marines: harpoons, long spears and tridents.

Faint transformation; CL: 7th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *buoyancy net*; Price: +500 gp.

Predator Staff

Description: This driftwood staff is stained red from the waters of the Blood Sea and embedded along its length with shark teeth. No one is quite sure who created the first *predator staff*, but since they are sought after by beastmakers they may well be druidic in design.

Powers: A *predator staff* is a +1 *quarterstaff*. While held during casting underwater, the bearer gains the benefit of the Silent Spell feat on all spells. The staff also possesses the following powers.

- *Greater magic fang* (2 charges)
- *Magic fang* (1 charge)
- *Call aquatic animal II* (2 charges)
- *Animal infusion* (aquatic animals only) (1 charge)

Moderate transformation; CL 7th; Craft Staff, *call aquatic animal II*, *greater magic fang*; Price: 25,000 gp; Weight: 5 lbs.

Seriden Shield

Description: These shields are fashioned from immense sea shells and are considered to be some of the most beautiful and exotic shields in all the lands. They are quite rare, though, as the shells must be recovered from deep sea beds before being enchanted by the clergy of Manawe. The majority of *seriden shields* (the origin of the name is lost, but loremasters suggest it came from the ancient merfolk tongue) are large shields, though a few buckler-size pieces have been found.

Powers: A *seriden shield* act as a +1 shield that offers an additional +2 deflection bonus to AC against melee and touch attacks by any creature with the aquatic descriptor.

Moderate abjuration; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *ghost armor*; Price +2 bonus; Weight: 15 lbs.

Stormcaller

Description: Loremasters of Lokil have ascertained that the mysterious Mistral, a cabal of Storm Children with sorcerous ability, are responsible for *stormcaller* weaponry. They did so in honor of the Dame of Storms, an homage to her fury.

Powers: When a weapon gifted with the *stormcaller* ability is wielded, a *gust of wind* rushes forth in the direction of the weapon's blow. The wind may grant the wielder a +2 circumstance bonus every round to either her attack roll or AC (usually manifesting as the wind blowing debris in the opponent's eyes at the perfect moment, or causing a cloak to whip in the way of an enemy's blade). Once per day the wielder can swing the weapon overhead and increase any prevailing wind force by one level in strength (see Chapter Three of the DMG). When held aloft, strong winds do not hinder the wielder, though any

vessel or structure she stands on may suffer. These weapons also grant their owners a +2 on all saves against all effects dealing with strong winds, whether natural or magical. Missile weapons cannot be conferred with this power.

Moderate evocation; CL 13th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *control winds*, *gust of wind*; Price: +2 bonus.

Magical Tattoos

The arts of decorating the body with needle and ink are quite common among sailors and those who make the sea their home. It should come as little surprise that those magicians who sail the seas have taken advantage of this fact to create some potent enchanted weapons.

Full rules for magical tattoos can be found in **Relics & Rituals** or **Relics & Rituals II: Lost Lore**.

Behemoth's Maw

Tattoo Ranks: 3

Powers: For years this vile marking was rarely seen except on the corpulent flesh of Gaurak's most devoted followers. Of late, however, several Blood Sea pirates have taken to being inked with *behemoth's maw*, adding to the infamy. When activated, this tattoo transforms the character's mouth into large gaping jaws lined with many sharp teeth much like those of a shark or lamprey. He may make a bite attack without the threat of incurring an attack of opportunity. His maw inflicts 1d8 base damage and scores a x2 critical on 18–20. While so deformed, the character also gains a +4 circumstance bonus to Intimidate checks.

Side Effects: While burned with the maw, it hurts the character to speak more than a few words at a time. An unnatural hunger, as per the *gluttony* spell (see **Relics & Rituals**), affects the character for the hour following the tattoo's activation.

Moderate transformation; CL 5th; Inscribe Magical Tattoo, *gluttony*, *magic fang*; 2800 gp; 1400 gp + 112 XP

Chest Bellows

Tattoo Ranks: 2

Powers: This tattoo is always inked on the character's chest. It is activated with a deep breath, allowing the character to exhale a *gust of wind* (as per the spell). It was originally intended to aid sailors who find their vessels becalmed, but bards' tales often regale an audience with inventive usages of a *chest bellows*, including some quite bawdy. This tattoo cannot be activated more than once per day.

Side Effects: The character is winded after usage and is considered fatigued for the following hour.

Moderate evocation; CL 5th; Inscribe Magical Tattoo, *gust of wind*; 4,100 gp; 2,050 gp + 164 XP

Mark of the Fish

Tattoo Ranks: 1

Powers: The stylized fish of this marking is fairly common along the shoulders of many who dare ply the seas of the Scarred Lands. When activated, it grants the character a +5 competence bonus to Swim checks and the ability to speak the Aquan language. This tattoo cannot be activated more than once per day.

Side Effects: None.

Faint transmutation; CL 3rd; Inscribe Magical Tattoo, *champion swimmer*, must be able to speak Aquan language; 2,400 gp; 1,200 gp + 96 XP

Feats

The unique situations that come with shipboard life have led to the development of a number of unique feats. Miracle feats may be taken only by clerics and are detailed in both **Relics & Rituals II: Lost Lore** and **Player's Guide to Clerics and Druids**. Tradition feats are detailed in **Player's Guide to Wizards, Bards and Sorcerers**.

Boarding Master

Prerequisites: Sneak Attack +1d6, Profession (sailor) 8 ranks.

Benefit: When the character leads an assault upon another ship unable to defend itself effectively, whether by surprise or simply by circumstance, he may add the severity of his sneak attack ability as a morale bonus to his crew. For example, if a pirate captain who is a 9th-level rogue led the attack on a defenseless merchant ship, she would instill in her crew a +5 morale bonus (she would normally inflict a +5d6 sneak attack). This bonus lasts only for the initial round of shipboard combat.

Sea Legs

The character's experience aboard a ship has taught her well how to remain on her feet while the deck rolls beneath her, even in stormy weather.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, Profession (sailor) 4 ranks.

Benefit: The character gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all Balance checks and a +1 bonus to all Reflex saves while aboard ship (this includes while climbing rigging, swinging from lines and below deck).

Sea's Kindness

Through either the workings of fate, the blessing of Manawe or simple good fortune, the character is extremely lucky at sea, often surviving adversity that would claim others.

Benefit: The character gains a +2 luck bonus to any Profession roll involving the sea and on any Swimming checks. Once per day he may also add a +1

luck bonus to any other single skill check or save while aboard a vessel, in the water or on an island.

Special: Characters who spend a majority of their time at sea are the only ones who can take this feat.

Wake Trailing

Some rangers have honed their talent to ensure that even if their quarry escapes them aboard ship, they can still track them down through noticing the pattern of a wake left behind.

Prerequisites: Wis 13, Profession (sailor) 5 ranks, Tracking.

Benefit: The character can add a +2 synergy bonus to any Profession (sailor) check when trying to follow the wake of another vessel, a tactic used when trying to avoid such hazards as reefs and whirlpools. This bonus may also be used to determine how long ago a ship passed (DC 15).

Whelm Landchild [Miracle]

The sea can be an angry realm. Manawe herself embodies the capricious of the ocean; one moment she can be generous and ensure a bountiful catch, the next malevolent and drown those who dare cross her waters. The goddess offers to certain members of her sect of the Children of the Shifting Sea a means to punish misbelievers who refuse to acquiesce her dominion over the waves.

Prerequisites: Cleric class levels, ability to channel negative energy (rebuke undead)

Benefit: By expending one rebuke undead attempt, the character may instill that negative energy as a malediction on another. She may then touch one individual to inflict a profane penalty to his Swimming check equal to her Charisma bonus. This curse, which manifests as the mark of the seaclaw wherever the character touches the person, remains in place until the target's next Swim check. This malediction may be dispelled by a cleric using a turn undead attempt; the turn undead check must equal the level of the cleric who cast the curse.

Sea Shanties [Tradition]

Prerequisites: Bard class levels, Profession (sailor) 3 ranks.

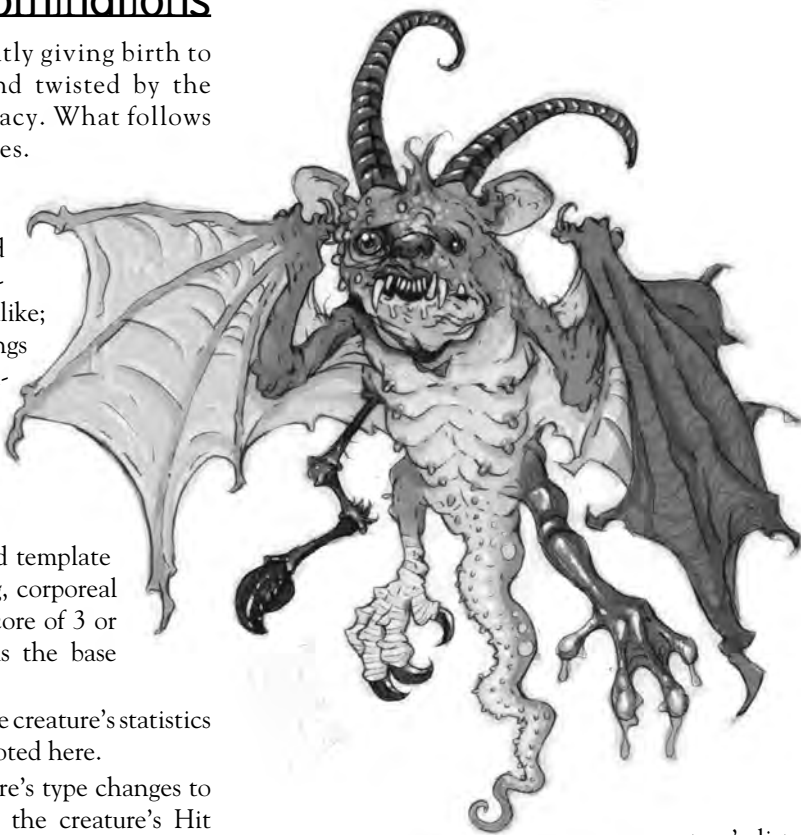
Benefit: These bards know work songs with a rhythm corresponding to the chores aboard ship — the hauling of lines and raising of sails or anchor. The character can use a sea shanty to remove the effect's fatigue. To be affected, an ally must hear the bard sing for a full round. The effect lasts as long as the bard sings and for 10 rounds after the bard ends the shanty (or 10 rounds after he can no longer hear the song). While singing the bard can fight or perform physical labor himself, but he cannot cast spells or activate magic items by spell completion or word. Sea shanties are considered a supernatural, mind-affecting ability.

Abominations

The Blood Sea is constantly giving birth to creatures filled with rage and twisted by the primal creation that is its legacy. What follows is a selection of such creatures.

Beastmade

The beastmade is the twisted creation of a beastmaker (see below). No two beastmade are ever alike; some have batlike wings with fangs dripping with venom, while others have multiple limbs with razor-sharp claws tipping the ends of their malformed digits.



Creating a Beastmade

“Beastmade” is an inherited template that can be added to any living, corporeal creature with an Intelligence score of 3 or higher (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

A beastmade uses all the base creature’s statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size and Type: The creature’s type changes to aberration. Do not recalculate the creature’s Hit Dice, base attack bonus or saves. Size is unchanged.

Speed: A beastmade retains the speed of the base creature, with any modifiers the beastmaker imbues upon the new form.

Armor Class: A beastmade retains the armor class of the base creature, with any modifiers the beastmaker grants to the new form (this stacks with any natural armor bonus the base creature has).

Special Attacks: A beastmade retains all the special attacks of the base creature in addition to any special attacks the beastmaker imbues on it.

Special Qualities: A beastmade has all the special qualities of the base creature, plus any additional qualities imbued by the beastmaker, as well as the following.

- Darkvision to 60 feet.
- Immunity to disease.
- +4 racial bonus on Fortitude saves against poison.

Abilities: Adjust from the base creature as follows: Cha –4.

Skills: A beastmade gains skill points as an aberration and has skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die. Do not include Hit Dice from class levels in this calculation — the beastmade gains aberration skill points only for its racial Hit Dice and gains the normal amount of skill points for its class levels. Treat skills from the base

creature’s list as class skills and other skills as cross-class.

Challenge Rating: As the base creature +1 per Quality and +1.5 per Attack.

Alignment: Same as the base creature

Blood Sea Mutant

While the full description of this template is given in **Creature Collection II: Dark Menagerie**, a quick version is provided here for random encounters and large groups.

Base Hit Dice increase one type to a maximum of d12, natural armor +2, gains bite attack if didn’t already have one, bite damage 1d8 (shift up or down by size from Medium), claw damage 1d6 (shift up or down by size from Medium), cold and fire resistance 10, amphibious, spell resistance (HD +8), Str +2, Con +2, Int +2, CR +1, alignment CE.

Blood-tainted

While the most dramatic effects of Kadum’s Blood are the strange new forms of Blood Sea mutants, the blood has several possible effects. The blood can create grotesques, horridly degenerate creatures. Another possibility is a slightly more subtle blood taint. Normally these effects occur only due to prolonged exposure to tainted fish or water. For the divine races a century and a half after the divine war, this is rare. Fish and other sea animals, on the other hand, do not have the luxury of escaping the influ-

ence of Kadum's blood. In addition, the chaos that came after the Titanswar meant many struggling communities did not have the luxury of not eating tainted food — if they were even aware of the problem in the first place. Blood taint can be cured with a *remove disease*, *heal* or *remove curse* spell.

Creating a Blood-tainted

“Blood-tainted” is a template that can be added to any living thing, elemental or outsider, excluding only constructs and undead. It cannot be combined with Blood Sea mutant template, nor can it be applied to creatures that are already products of Kadum's blood, such as razorfin dolphins. Green pisceans influenced by the blood may become blood-tainted as part of the process of becoming black pisceans. Other creatures may become blood-tainted and then change over time to Blood Sea mutants. In most cases the creature's type changes to “aberration.” Fey, elementals and outsiders retain their type, but all blood-tainted gain “tainted” as a subtype. A blood-tainted uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size: Roll 1d10. On 8–9, increase size by 1. On a 10, size increases by 2.

Hit Dice: The base creature's Hit Dice increase by one die type, to a maximum of d12. For example, a creature with 4d10 Hit Dice has 4d12 Hit Dice after it becomes tainted. This applies to future HD added, as well.

Speed: Aquatic creatures lacking mobility on land gain speed 15.

AC: Natural armor improves by +2.

Attacks: The tainted gains a bite attack if it did not already have one. If the creature does not have a claw attack, it has a 25% chance of growing twisted limbs and gaining a claw attack. These limbs may take the form of spines, tentacles or small stunted heads.

Damage: Use the damage values below or the base creature's claw and/or bite damage, whichever is greater.

Size	Bite Damage	Claw Damage
Fine	1d2	1
Diminutive	1d3	1d2
Tiny	1d4	1d3
Small	1d6	1d4
Medium	1d8	1d6
Large	1d10	1d8
Huge	2d8	2d4
Gargantuan	2d10	2d6
Colossal	4d8	2d8

Special Attacks: A blood-tainted retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains the following.

Random Special Attack: The creature gains one special attack plus another at 4 HD and each 4 HD thereafter. Roll 1d10 on the following table to determine special attacks. The GM may simply assign special attacks, of course. With a large group of similar creatures it might make life significantly easier to assign these attacks identically to each member. A few can be varied to provide more flavor, without the headache of trying to deal with five or more completely different subtypes. All special attacks are Extraordinary abilities.

Roll	Special Attack
1	Poison bite or claw (select effect from <i>DMG</i> , Chapter 8, “Poison”)
2	Poison spittle (contact poison with DC of 10 + 1/2 base creature's HD + Con modifier; initial damage is 1d3 Dex, secondary damage is 2d6 Dex, treated as a ranged touch attack with range of 10 feet)
3	Long fangs/claws (bite or claw damage improves as if size increased)
4	Leap attack (may make a special leaping charge, at normal movement but allowing full attack)
5	Suckers/hooks (+4 on grapple checks)
6	Slimy (–4 on opponent's grapple checks or checks to extricate from the creature's grapple)
7	Sticky web (has the web abilities of a spider of equal size; see <i>MM</i>)
8	Acidic spittle (1d6 acid damage/2 HD, ray equal to reach, Reflex save for half damage at DC 10+1/2 base creature's HD+blood-tainted's Con modifier; victim suffers half its initial damage as secondary damage the following round)
9	Electrical touch (1d6 electrical damage/4 HD added to claw and bite attacks)
10	Frightful presence (see <i>MM</i> , Glossary, “Special Attacks”)

Special Qualities: A blood-tainted retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the following.

Air Breathing (Ex): Fully aquatic tainted gain the ability to stay out of the water for short periods of time. Every 10 minutes out of water, the creature takes 1d6 nonlethal damage. After an hour the tainted takes 1d6 regular damage per ten minutes.

Amphibious (Ex): Nonaquatic tainted gain the ability to breathe underwater with no difficulties.

Blood Fever Carrier (Ex): Anyone touching a blood-tainted that is slimy or takes damage from the creature's attack is possibly subject to

blood fever. This is handled as contact with a victim of blood fever (see above). If a blood-tainted creature is killed and eaten the chance of contracting blood fever is naturally higher.

Blood Rage (Ex): If blood is in the water the blood-tainted must make a Will saving throw to avoid becoming enraged. In combat, any bleeding character may be a victim. If the nearest bleeding character is an ally of the blood-tainted, the Will saving throw has a DC of 12. If the nearest bleeding character is an enemy, the DC is 15, but the blood-tainted can — and often does — willfully embrace this rage. The blood tainted is at -4 for any saving throws to resist the effects of Kadum's blood.

Fearless (Ex): Blood-tainted creatures are completely immune to the effects of fear, magical or otherwise. This is not always a positive trait. Animals will normally flee in the face of significant threat or injury, but not once the blood taint is within them.

Native Blood Sea (Su): Outsiders or elementals rarely stay in the waters of the Blood Sea long enough to become tainted. Once they do, however, they become tied to Kadum's power. An outsider or elemental with blood taint treats the Blood Sea as its plane of origin. Blood-tainted outsiders and elementals can be summoned by blood witches and similar spellcasters and count as one level higher than normal. One blood-tainted Medium water elemental could be summoned with *summon monster VI*, for example.

Rage (Ex): A blood-tainted that takes damage in combat flies into a berserk rage the following round, clawing and biting madly until either it or its opponent is dead. Furthermore, after its enemy is dead it must make a Will saving throw at DC 12 to avoid attacking the nearest enemy. An enraged creature gains +4 Strength, +4 Constitution and -2 AC. The creature cannot end its rage voluntarily.

Random Special Quality: Roll 1d12 on the following table for random special qualities. Alternately, the GM may assign a special quality to the creature.

Roll	Special Quality
1	Damage reduction 5/piercing (DR 5/magic if this result comes up twice)
2	Fast healing 1
3	Regeneration 2 (normal damage from fire)
4	Resistance 5 (roll 1d4; 1: sonic, 2-3: electricity, 4: acid)
5	Scent (+5 on scent rolls if creature already has scent)
6	Darkvision 60 ft.
7	Fly at speed 30 (average) (if creature can already fly, speed is +30 and one better maneuverability class)
8	Chameleon (+10 Hide)
9	Blindsight 60 ft.
10	Natural armor +2 (stacks with any base natural armor)
11	Reach +5 ft.
12	Roll 1d10 for result twice. Doubled results are additive, such as darkvision 120 ft.

Saves: Same as the base creature

Abilities: Increase from the base creature's abilities as follows: Str +2, Con +2, Int +2 (if Int is less than 8, otherwise no adjustment), Wis -2, Cha +2

Skills: Same as the base creature

Feats: Same as the base creature



Environment: Same as the base creature (though in or near the Blood Sea)

Organization: Same as the base creature

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1

Treasure: Same as the base creature

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: Same as base creature

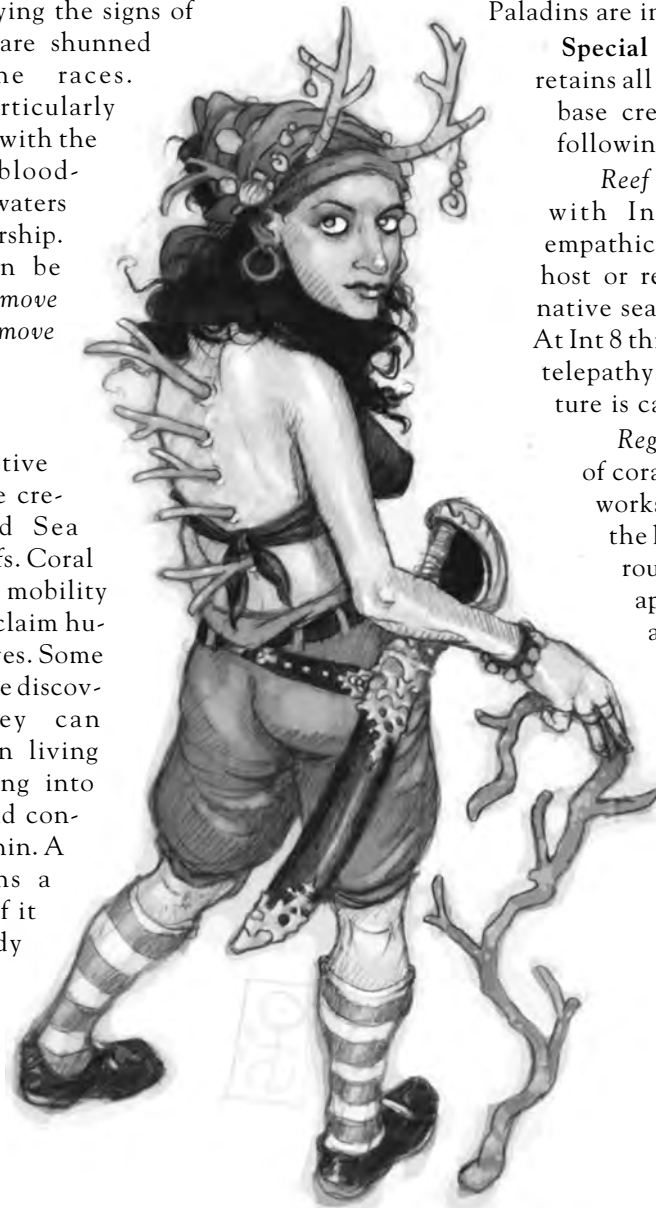
Quick Form: Sometimes repeated or quick applications of this template are necessary, particularly with random encounters. In such cases, apply the following for a simplified version of the template: Speed 15 (if aquatic), +2 natural armor, DR 5/piercing, claw/bite attacks upgraded two die types, amphibious, blood fever carrier, fearless, rage, CR +1, alignment chaotic evil. At 4 HD, suckers, at 8 HD slimy.

Blood-tainted Characters

Those betraying the signs of Kadum's blood are shunned by the divine races. Titanspawn, particularly those associated with the sea, seek out blood-tainted fish or waters to consume as worship. Blood taint can be cured with a *remove disease*, *heal* or *remove curse* spell.

Coral Host

These deceptive creatures are the creation of Blood Sea mutant coral reefs. Coral of the reef lack mobility and often try to claim human or other slaves. Some mutant coral have discovered that they can propagate within living creatures, growing into the skeletons and controlling from within. A coral host gains a blood template if it does not already have one.



Coral reefs are interested in food and expanding their sphere of control. Coral hosts will seek to find ways to travel long distances so they can settle into the ocean and birth a new coral reef. Most valuable are virgin reefs, where mutant coral can establish themselves quickly. These attempts have had limited success outside the Blood Sea, as the lack of tainted water stifles Blood Sea mutant coral.

Coral hosts become coralline skeletons within 1d3 weeks of their death.

Special Attacks: A coral host retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains the following.

Parasite (Su): The host can infect other living creatures with coral larvae with a successful bite attack. The infestation succeeds if the victim fails a Fortitude save (DC 10+Constitution modifier of coral host). Paladins are immune to this infestation.

Special Qualities: A coral host retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the following.

Reef Unity (Su): A coral host with Int 6 can communicate empathically with any other coral host or reef within a mile, or any native sea creature within 100 feet. At Int 8 this communication becomes telepathy, assuming the target creature is capable of speech.

Regeneration (Ex): The hive of coral within the host creature works to ensure the safety of the host, regenerating 5 hp per round. Regeneration does not apply to energy or acid damage, and is limited to an amount equal to the host's normal hit point total per day.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1.

Coralline Skeleton

Dead coral hosts or other remains of living creatures can become the framework for a coral intelligence. The power of Kadum's blood infuses the skeletons, raising them as undead, but fused with the coral colony. A coralline skeleton is a template added to the skeleton template (see MM).

Attacks: A coralline skeleton has an additional bite attack, attacking with a standard 2 claw + bite sequence.

Speed: The extra weight of the coral encrusted around the skeleton slows it down, and all skeletons are treated as carrying a medium load. Normally this would also mean that they could not swim, but see special qualities below.

AC: Natural armor improves by +2.

Special Attacks: A coralline skeleton gains the following.

Parasite (Su): While undead, the coralline skeleton can infect other living creatures with coral larvae with a successful bite or claw attack. The infestation succeeds if the victim fails a Fortitude save (DC 10+1/2 HD of coralline skeleton). Paladins are immune to this infestation. Victims will become coral hosts.

Special Qualities: A coralline skeleton retains all of its special qualities and gains the following.

Clamber (Ex): Sea creatures made into coralline skeletons gain a land speed equal to 1/4 Swim speed (after encumbrance is taken into account). The skeleton walks on ribs and limbs in a disturbingly jerky motion.

Drift Current (Su): A coralline skeleton can control the water around it such that it can move at normal speed through the water without hindrance, gaining a Swim speed equal to normal unencumbered speed.

Reef Unity (Su): A coralline skeleton with Int 6 can communicate empathically with any native sea creature or coral entity within a mile. At Int 8 this becomes telepathy with any creature capable of speech within a mile.

Saves: Same as the base creature



Abilities:

Increase from the base creature's abilities as follows: +1 Int for Tiny coralline skeletons, +2 per additional size class, Cha +2

Skills: Same as the base creature

Feats: Same as the base creature

Environment: Shallows, coasts, and islands of the Blood Sea

Organization: Solitary, pair, drift (2–5), colony (6–25), reef (50–100 Medium, plus one Large per 10, plus one Huge per 20, plus one Gargantuan per 40, plus one Colossal per 100)

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1 (+2 for Blood Sea mutant)

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: Tiny, Small and Medium —; Large 3 HD (Large); Huge 5–15 HD (Huge); Gargantuan 17–31 HD (Gargantuan); Colossal 33–64 HD (Colossal)

Gore Vampire, Gore Lich

In the deep ocean trenches Kadum's effluvia has pooled, changing in the century since it was spilled. Creatures dwelling in this purified essence have become something different than before — more than simply mutated. They are creatures of the gore.

The gore template is a combination of an undead template and a taint template. The two most common forms are the gore vampire — Blood Sea mutant + vampire — and the gore lich — blood-tainted + lich. Most natural animals become gore vampires, whereas dragons, elementals, humanoids and outsiders become gore liches.

Gore vampires have lairs instead of coffins. In addition, they cannot cross strong currents and are destroyed in regions of extreme turbulence. These help restrict most gore creatures to their trenches.

Gore liches each have a worked bit of bone or rock that functions as a phylactery. This is normally hidden in the lair.

The gore template has additional drawbacks. Gore creatures feed on Kadum's essence — they cannot survive long away from it. Outside home trenches gore creatures suffer much as a normal creature does in progressively hotter environments. Normal deep Blood Sea environment is treated as very hot, surface or deep coastal waters as extreme heat, and the light surface or peripheral waters of the Blood Sea as abyssal heat. Untainted seawater is analogous to boiling water, and spells that purify water can be a potent threat to gore creatures.

Creatures of the gore can travel throughout the deep with little trouble, but they eventually return home. Only the largest gore creatures do



this, however, and usually only when the waters of the trenches are disturbed.

Beings with part of a gore template gain the other portion when they become a creature of the gore. A blood-tainted merfolk would gain the lich template and then be considered a gore lich.

Red pisceans, grotesques and other products of Kadum's blood are considered as already possessing blood taint. They add the vampire or lich template when exposed to gore.

A *remove curse* will eliminate the undead template and revert the creature back to a Blood Sea mutant or blood-tainted being. For this purpose the creature has an effective SR equal to its HD, or its normal SR if it is higher.

Special Qualities: A gore creature retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains the benefits of an undead and blood template, plus the following.

Blood Sight (Su): Gore creatures are unaffected by visibility limitations due to Kadum's blood.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1 (for Blood Sea mutant or blood tainted) or +2 (for vampire or lich).

Cadaver Bloom

Large Plant	
Hit Dice:	4d8 + 20 (38 hp)
Initiative:	-1
Speed:	0 ft.
AC:	12 (-1 size, +3 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 12
Base Attack/Grapple:	—
Attack:	—
Full Attack:	—
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Pollen spray
Special Qualities:	Necromantic redolence, plant
Saves:	Fort +9, Ref —, Will +0
Abilities:	Str —, Dex —, Con 20, Int 1, Wis 8, Cha 2
Skills:	—
Feats:	—
Environment:	Warm forest
Organization:	Solitary or patch (2-4)
Challenge Rating:	2
Treasure:	1/10th coins; 50% goods; 50% items
Alignment:	Always neutral
Advancement:	5-10 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment:	—

A blossoming plant grows low to the ground, more than twice the span of a man across. The large flower has mauve fleshy petals. The bloom gives off the revolting stench of rotten meat and a cloud of flies hover about.

Description

The bloom's odor attracts undead that feed on corpses, especially ghouls and ghosts, who tend to linger near the plant. When prey approaches, the undead attack. The blood and fragments that fall near the bloom's roots serve to nourish the plant.

Combat

A cadaver bloom has no real means of attack. Any living creature that comes within 15 feet of the flower will be sprayed with pollen, however.

Necromantic Redolence (Ex): Undead that eat carrion are drawn to the cadaver bloom. All within 10 miles range must make a DC 15 Will save every day or be drawn toward the flower. After spending a day within sight of the plant, the undead are allowed another save to lose interest.

Pollen Spray (Ex): Movement by a living creature within 15 feet of the bloom will cause the plant to spray a stream of pollen from its flower. If the target fails a DC 15 Reflex save, he is squarely struck by the crimson pollen. He will carry the bloom's rotten odor, attracting undead as above, until he completely washes off the pollen. Should he be killed before cleaned, the pollen will germinate in the decaying remains and give rise to a 1 HD cadaver bloom in two weeks. A bloom can emit no more than four pollen sprays in one day.



Crab, Ghost

Gargantuan Vermin	
Hit Dice:	24d8 + 24 (132 hp)
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	50 ft. (10 squares), burrow 20 ft. (4 squares)
AC:	22 (−4 size, +2 Dex, +14 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 20
Base Attack/Grapple:	+18/+37
Attack:	Claw +25 melee (2d8+7)
Full Attack:	2 claws +18 melee (2d8+7)
Space/Reach:	20 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks:	Improved grab, squeeze
Special Qualities:	Camouflage, tremorsense, vermin
Saves:	Fort +15, Ref +10, Will +8
Abilities:	Str 25, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 2
Skills:	Balance +10, Hide +0/+6, Spot +9
Feats:	—
Environment:	Beach
Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	14
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral
Advancement:	25–28 HD (Gargantuan)
Level Adjustment:	—

A gigantic crab, its shell the color of bleached bones, erupts from beneath the sand. Its waving claws look powerful enough to cut a man in twain.

Description

Ghost crabs are aggressive predators that spend most daylight hours buried under the white sand beaches of several islands in the Blood Sea. Though nocturnal, should a resting crab sense potential prey approaching, it will not hesitate to burrow free and attack, often surprising its next meal. At night, ghost crabs scour the beach near the water's edge for anything edible that may have washed ashore.

The male's pincers are black-tipped with the right claw significantly larger than the left (inflicting 2d10+7 damage). Some impious souls have compared being trapped within the terrible grasp of one of these creatures to being crushed by the hand of a god.



These immense vermin are not believed to be mutations caused by the Blood Sea; indeed, they seem immune to the effects of Kadum's taint, and alchemists have been willing to pay a princely sum for crab ichor in the hopes of distilling a cure for the blood fever. Some have conjectured that Hrinruuk created the ghost crabs as near-perfect hunters along the shore.

The cooked meat of a ghost crab is said to be one the finest delicacies known — and an adult crab could well be a feast serving many — but the price of procuring such a meal might be too high.

Combat

During the day, ghost crabs will not surface from their burrows unless disturbed or they sense prey with their tremorsense. If facing multiple opponents, a crab will grab the nearest sizable target with its claws and attempt to flee, often surprising its foes with its speed.

Camouflage (Ex): A ghost crab receives a +6 racial bonus to Hide checks only when it is concealing itself along the white sand beaches.

Improved Grab (Ex): A ghost crab that hits with its claw attack may immediately initiate a grapple.

Squeeze (Ex): A ghost crab that gets a hold on an opponent of smaller size automatically deals damage with its claw in the following rounds until the opponent expires or escapes the crab's grasp.

Tremorsense (Ex): Ghost crabs can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 feet that is in contact with the sand.

Fathom Devil

Huge Outsider (Aquatic, Lawful, Evil)	
Hit Dice:	15d8 + 105 (171 hp)
Initiative:	-1
Speed:	swim 20 ft. (4 squares)
AC:	20 (-2 size, -1 Dexterity, +13 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 20
Base Attack/Grapple:	+18/+32
Attack:	Slam +24 (2d6+6) or bite +24 (3d12+6)
Full Attack:	Slam +24 (2d6+6), bite +19 (3d12+6)
Damage:	2d6 + 6 /19-20 or 3d12 +3
Space/Reach:	15 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Acquiescence aura, spell-like abilities, weakness gaze
Special Qualities:	Devil traits, DR 15/+1, regeneration 5, SR 20, <i>summon devil</i>
Saves:	Fort +20, Ref +10, Will +15
Abilities:	Str 22, Dex 9, Con 25, Int 20, Wis 16, Cha 18
Skills:	Climb +17, Diplomacy +20, Hide +8, Intimidate +18, Listen +15, Knowledge (arcane) +15, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Move Silently +12, Search +18, Spot +24
Feats:	Awareness, Improved Critical (slam), Power Attack, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Weapon Focus (slam)
Environment:	Underwater
Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	18
Treasure:	Double standard
Alignment:	Lawful evil
Advancement:	16-20 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment:	—

The creature looks like an immense black starfish veined with angry red, stretching some fifteen feet across. A blood-red eye hovers in the water above the body's center. On the creature's underside is a central maw filled with teeth made of coral.

Description

Fathom devils are evil outsiders that dwell in the ocean depths of both the Iron Hells and the Scarred Lands. These creatures avoid the whims of gods and infernal lords and seek to bring order to the chaos of the deep, albeit a harsh rule of law under their own tyrannical rule. Fortunately, they are rare and the seas are vast, so little has changed, though small “domains” with fathom devil overseers do exist in areas underwater. According to some followers of Manawe, black pisceans have been seen recently meeting with a fathom devil in an isolated trench; should an



alliance be set between such creatures, the politics of the oceans may soon be very dangerous indeed.

Fathom devils speak Aquan, Common and Infernal.

Combat

Fathom devils prefer not to engage in melee whenever possible. Not that they are physically weak — anything but, as one of their thick tentacles can crush a normal man's chest — but rather they see the wisdom in having minions do the crude task of fighting while they hang back and use their spell-like abilities and gaze attacks. Defeated opponents may not be killed but rather enslaved.

Acquiescence Aura (Su): As a free action, a fathom devil can create an aura of acquiescence in a 10-foot radius. The effect is otherwise identical to *rend the sovereign soul* spell (caster level 13th, Will DC 15 negates). If the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by that fathom devil's aura for 24 hours.

Weakness Gaze (Su): A fathom devil has a gaze attack that deals 1d6 Strength damage to any creature that fails its DC 20 Fortitude save.

Spell-like Abilities: At will — *bane, curse water, darkness, death knell, detect good, detect magic, dispel magic, knock, levitate, see invisibility, suggestion, teleport without error* (self plus 50 pounds of gear only); 1/day — *charm monster, eyebite, great knock, prying eyes, water breathing*. Caster level 13th; save DC 14 + spell level, DC 16 + spell level with enchantment magic.

Summon Devil (Sp): Once per day, a fathom devil can attempt to summon another of its kind, with a 25% chance of success.

Golem, Rot

Large Construct	
Hit Dice:	9d10 +30 (79 hp)
Initiative:	–1
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares)
Armor Class:	20 (–1 size, –1 Dex, +12 natural), touch 8, flat footed 20 +6/+15
Base Attack/Grapple:	+6/+15
Attack:	Slam +10 melee (2d8+5)
Full Attack:	2 slams +10 melee (2d8+5)
Space/Reach:	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Rot touch
Special Qualities:	Construct traits, damage reduction 10/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic, low-light vision
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +3
Abilities:	Str 21, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1
Skills:	—
Feats:	—
Environment:	Any land and underground
Organization:	Solitary or gang (2–4)
Challenge Rating:	9
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always chaotic evil
Advancement Range:	10–18 HD (Large); 19–27 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment:	—

The flesh of this being is dotted with rotting pustules, and the gagging reek wafts from it like meat gone bad. Writhing pockets of white maggots are visible in some of the open sores upon its body.

Description

Normally golems are magically created automatons of great power. Constructing one involves the employment of powerful magic and elemental forces. The rot golem is the exception to the rule. As the blood of the titan Kadum entered into a typical flesh golem, it subverted the animating force and replacing it with a dark, corrupting power. The construct is no longer follows the will of its creator, but instead seeks instinctively to follow the will of Kadum.

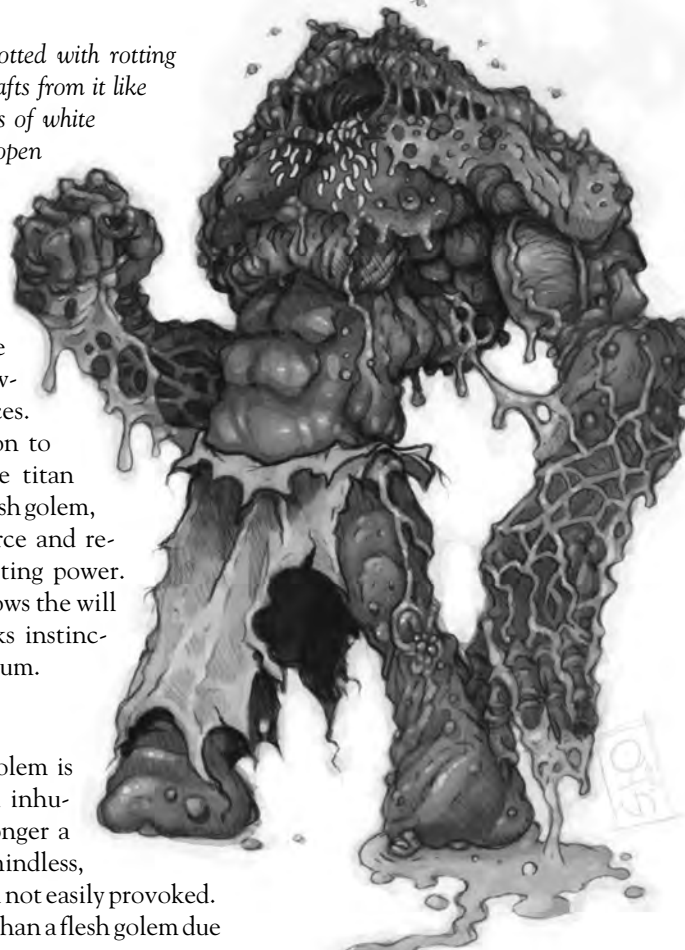
Combat

Like all golems, the rot golem is tenacious in combat, and still inhumanly strong. Although no longer a flesh golem, it is still quite mindless, thus emotionless in combat and not easily provoked. The rot golem is more resilient than a flesh golem due

to the rot that pervades its body, and is even more dangerous due to its ability to spread the rot that slowly destroys its flesh.

Magic Immunity (Ex): Rot golems are immune to all spells, spell-like abilities and supernatural effects, except as follows. Fire-based effects do double damage, as the fire burns away the rot from the flesh. Cold-based effects *slow* them (as the spell) for 2d6 rounds with no saving throw. Regeneration-based effects will kill a rot golem unless it makes a Fortitude save (DC 10 + caster's level). Acid-based effects heal the golem (paradoxically enough), breaking any *slow* effect on the golem and curing 1 point for every 2 points of damage.

Rot Touch (Ex): The touch of a rot golem causes any exposed flesh to rot away slowly and painfully unless a DC 15 Fortitude save is made. Failure on this save indicates that the victim suffers initial damage of 1d4 hit points, followed by 1d4 hit points per day. Any regenerative effects (including *cure* spells) will cure the rot. Any flesh golem touched by a rot golem will turn into a rot golem in 1d4 days.



Golem, Rust

Large Construct	
Hit Dice:	18d10 +30 (129 hp)
Initiative:	-1
Speed:	20 ft. (5 squares)
Armor Class:	30 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +22 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 30
Base Attack/Grapple:	+12/+28
Attack:	Slam +23 melee (2d10+11)
Full Attack:	2 slams +23 melee (2d10+11)
Space/Reach:	10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Breath weapon, rust touch
Special Qualities:	Construct traits, damage reduction 20/ adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic, low-light vision
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +6
Abilities:	Str 33, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1
Skills:	—
Feats:	—
Environment:	Any land
Organization:	Solitary or gang (2-4)
Challenge Rating:	15
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always chaotic evil
Advancement Range:	19-24 HD (Large); 25-54 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment:	—

Made of metal, the figure moves as if an iron statue come to life. Its surface is covered with rust that flakes in sheets as it moves.

Description

Normally golems are magically created automatons of great power. Constructing one involves the employment of powerful magic and elemental forces.

The rust golem, however, is the exception to the rule, as the blood of the titan Kadum rained down upon a typical iron golem and subverted the animating force, replacing it with a dark, corrupting power. The construct no longer follows the will of its creator but instead seeks instinctively to follow the will of Kadum.

Combat

Like all golems, the rust golem is tenacious in combat and inhumanly strong. Although no longer an iron golem, it is still quite mindless, thus emotionless in combat and not easily provoked. The rust golem is no less a monstrous combatant than an iron golem, and unlike its rust-vulnerable "kin," rust golems *thrive* on rust.

Breath Weapon (Su): Like the iron golem, a rust golem will breathe a cloud of poisonous gas during the first or second round of combat in a 10-foot cube directly in front of it. The cloud lasts for one round. A DC 17 Fortitude save is necessary; failure results in initial damage of 1d4 temporary Constitution loss, and secondary damage is a loss of 1d4 hit points, as the magical rust has diluted the effects of the golem's breath weapon.

Magic Immunity (Ex): Rust golems are immune to all spells, spell-like abilities and supernatural effects, except as follows. Electricity-based effects *slow* them (as the spell) for 2d6 rounds with no saving throw. *Heat metal* will destroy a rust golem unless it succeeds in a Reflex save (DC 15 + caster level). *Rust-based effects, however, will heal them immediately back to full hit points.*

Rust (Ex): The touch of a rust golem causes any metallic weapons, armor and items to corrode immediately into rubbish, becoming nothing more than useless piles of junk. Magic armor and weapons and other magic items made of metal must succeed at a DC 20 Reflex save or be immediately destroyed. Any metal weapon that does damage to a rust golem also corrodes immediately. An iron golem touched by a rust golem must succeed at a DC 20 Reflex save or turn into a rust golem in 1d4 days.



Wooden Helmsman

Medium Construct	
Hit Dice:	4d10 (22 hp)
Initiative:	+0
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares)
AC:	15 (+5 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 15
Base Attack/Grapple:	+2/+3
Attack:	Slam +2 melee (1d6+1)
Full Attack:	2 slams +2 melee (1d6+1)
Space/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	—
Special Qualities:	Construct, magic immunity, meld into wood
Saves:	Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 12, Dex 10, Con —, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills:	Intuit Direction +6, Profession (sailor) +12
Feats:	Skill Focus (profession - sailor)
Environment:	Aboard ship
Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	2
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always lawful neutral
Advancement Range:	5–6 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment:	—

The figure piloting the ship is a finely carved man. The wood looks recently oiled and gold inlay gleams in the sun. The construct never takes its attention from away from the helm.

Description

With the rise of piracy in the Blood Sea, merchants saw the need to outfit their vessels with a construct that would ensure that the ships reach port even with a disabled or missing crew.

Upon animation, a helmsman is bonded to a wooden vessel. From then on, it will stay dormant until called upon to steer. Should the ship run into danger and no one stand at the helm for more than an hour, the helmsman will automatically move to take the wheel. Before a ship leaves the docks, the ship's captain or the construct's creator may inform the helmsman of the destination; it will then ensure to the best of its ability the ship safely arrives there. Only the ship's legitimate captain or owner or the helmsman's creator can countermand this.

A helmsmen cannot speak but understands all languages, responding with a minimum of show.

Combat

A wooden helmsman will fight only to defend itself or the ship it is currently been commanded to steer.

Magic Immunity (Ex): Wooden helmsmen are immune to all spells, spell-like abilities and supernatural effects, except as follows. A *warp wood* spell inflicts 1 point of damage per level of the caster. *Woodshape* conversely cures a helmsman of 1d10 points of damage. Fire effects still affect these constructs as normal.

Meld into Wood (Su): At any time, as a free action, a helmsman may sink into a wooden object of at least 6 cubic ft. Usually this is the main mast of a ship. While within the wood, the helmsman is aware of his surroundings but cannot be harmed unless the wood is burned or hacked apart. The helmsman recovers 1 point of damage for every day spent melded.

Construction

A wooden helmsman is made bearing the emblem of its creator merchant houses, often on the forehead or chest. The wealthier houses vaunt their riches by inlaying the construct with gold or precious gems, but such trappings are unnecessary.

A wooden helmsman must be carved from a single block of wood (weighing at least 400 lbs.) from any island tree. The construct costs 30,000 gp to create, including the 500 gp for the body. Carving the figure requires a successful DC 15 Craft (woodworking) check. The creator must be 12th level and able to cast arcane spells. Completing the ritual drains 750 XP from the creator and requires *live wood*, *swift water* and *tongues* be cast.



Burning Sails

Transmutation

Level: Sor/Wiz 5, Swt 4

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One sailing ship

Duration: 1 hour/level

Saving Throw: See below

Spell Resistance: See below

Description

The wizards employed by House Asuras were tasked to develop a spell that would not only fend off pirates but also help a ship reach port. After much research and trial and error (including one vessel that nearly caught fire at the Mithril docks), they developed *burning sails*. The spell transforms a ship's normal sails into sheets of glowing green flame. Asuras has been desperately trying to guard knowledge of the spell, but it is only a matter of time before spies from a few rival merchant houses manage to steal away scrolls.

Spell Effect

Burning sails affords two effects. First, any onlooker seeing such frightful sails must make a successful Will save or be so fearful of the ship they will be unable to approach within 100 yards. Even with a successful roll, witnesses below 5th level will be *shaken* and reluctant to engage the vessel. Of course, those aboard the ship during the time of the casting are immune to the effects of the spell even should they leave before the duration ends.

Secondly, the enchanted sails can propel the ship without wind; even in the calmest waters, the ship will move at 150% its normal sailing speed. The burning sails are not hindered by poor weather, so strong wind forces that would normally rip apart normal sails do nothing more than speed the boat along its way.

Material Component: A bolt of expensive emerald-colored silk (100 gp).

Chart Bearer

Transmutation

Level: Rgr 1, Swt 1

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 day/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Description

A map is scripture to a sailor. A chart may instruct how best to circumvent dangerous reefs or indicate which island may have water and food to replenish supplies. Pirates, of course, have another use for maps, to help them recover buried treasure. A crafty sea witch can use this spell to steal a map so he may transcribe it later in private. A variant of this spell, sometimes referred to as *map bearer*, is known to certain rangers.

Spell Effect

With *chart bearer*, a sea witch may touch any map and have the drawings leech from the page or sheet, becoming a temporary tattoo someplace on his own body. The size of the map is in no way reduced and will cover the same amount of flesh as it did vellum. The sea witch can choose where on his person the map appears, and many hide the markings afterward. The spell permanently erases the original chart. The sea witch must transcribe the drawings (often with the use of a mirror) before the spell's duration runs out and the tattoo fades. Note that should the map be protected with any sort of glyph or rune, the casting sea witch suffers a -2 penalty on any saves after triggering such effects.

Material Component: A small bottle of ink.

Clarify Water

Transmutation

Level: Clr 4, Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 3, Water 3

Components: V, S, F/DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area: Sphere with radius 10 ft./level

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates (object)

Spell Resistance: Yes (object)

Description

First developed by the merfolk long ago to keep stale interior waters fresh, this spell is now used by clerics to purify water sources throughout the Scarred Lands. Druids of Denev make use of this spell to cure polluted lakes and rivers inland. Unfortunately, these are usually temporary measures, at best. Contaminants often sink into ground water or soil and so seep back into water sources easily. Pisceans make use of this spell both to freshen water and to fend off gore creatures.

Spell Effect

Within the area of effect any open bodies of water are turned to normal aerated water, eliminating any contaminants. Seawater can be kept salty or made pure at the caster's option. The spell will not penetrate barriers, so closed containers are unaffected. Silt, disease factors, algae and any vermin smaller than Fine size are destroyed. It has no effect on water elementals or other creatures with the water subtype.

If an area is clarified within a larger body of contaminated water, such as the Blood Sea, the contamination will flow back in. The sphere of clear water will contract by 5 ft./round, or 10 ft./round in turbulent water. The sphere may close in a single round in a fierce flow of water.

When cast by a good cleric the spell will turn unholy water to normal water. The same applies to evil clerics casting *clarify water* upon holy water.

Pisceans and other titanspawn use a version of the spell that does not destroy titan blood but merely disperses it out of the area of effect. Whether cast by piscean or human, concentrated or congealed blood has a SR to contend with.

Arcane Focus: One clear diamond worth at least 500 gp, held in one fist while the spell is cast.

Clear Sight

Divination

Level: Drd 3, Rgr 3, Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

Description

The first recorded use of this spell was by sorcerous archers in the ancient Ledeian Empire. It was one of a number of spells considered essential to archer units in ancient times. It has been called archer's friend, ranger's friend and other similar names.

Spell Effect

The affected character is able to see through fog, foliage and similar obstructions. It eliminates the penalties due to concealment. Dust storms, underwater silt, haze and similar obscurement is ignored. It does not help against all forms of concealment—*blur*, blindness and darkness still provide concealment. It has no effect on obstacles—cover penalties apply normally.

Material Components: A dried eagle's or squid's eye.

Feren's Essential Exclusion

Conjuration (Creation) [Force]

Level: Sor/Wiz 5

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

Description

Feren developed this spell based on *Feren's zone of purity* and the ever-popular *mage armor*. It acts similarly, creating a barrier of force around the target. However, this barrier creates a filmy surface around the character. This surface protects against harmful fogs, mists and contact with a number of effects. It also screens out Kadum's blood—the purpose Feren was intent on.

Spell Effect

The touched character is protected by a force barrier. Fogs, mists and light rain are screened. This protects against contact or inhaled poisons and spells that function similarly, such as *cloudkill*. It does not prevent suffocation or otherwise freshen air. Sprayed acid, touch attacks and other forceful applications of dangerous substances penetrate with no trouble. *Solid fog* is unaffected. While the fog does not actually touch the target, the substance is still difficult to move through.

Underwater the effect is similar. Water penetrates the force, but any impurities within it are filtered out, including Kadum's blood. A violent storm may penetrate the spell temporarily. Any contamination that does manage to get through is flushed out as soon as possible, but the spell does not purify the target creature.

Gore creatures treat this as a hostile spell. A bubble of fresh water around them is deadly.

Material Components: A wax bead.

Feren's Zone of Purity

Transmutation

Level: Sor/Wiz 5

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Area: Sphere of radius 10 ft./level (5 ft./level underwater)

Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (object)

Spell Resistance: Yes (object)

Description

Feren the Seascryer was a prominent wizard interested in exploring the Blood Sea rather directly. Though regarded as dangerous and reckless by the civil authority, his career was highly successful until his disappearance in 142 A.V. His primary contributions were a number of spells useful for aquatic exploration and mapping of several piscean watchtowers.

This spell is based on *fog bane*, a spell developed by the Glamerhill war college during the third Ledeian dynasty. *Fog bane* functions only in the air and lasts 10 minutes/level.

Spell Effect

The spell creates a region of pure air, shoving aside contaminants and fog. Storms are reduced in severity as well—wind force drops one step (“windstorm” to “severe,” for example). Rain is reduced so that visibility is 3/4 range rather than 1/2 range, and the penalty to Spot and Search is only –2.

Underwater the area of effect is halved to 5 ft./level. It will remove silt and contaminants within the water, including blood taint. In thicker substances, such as mud, the radius is only 2 ft./level.

This spell will protect against any other spell or spell-like ability that depends on natural fog, that is, a substance that could be blown away by wind. Breath weapons, sprayed acid and similar forceful applications are unaffected. Creatures with water or air descriptors, such as elementals, are unaffected as well.

The zone has no effect on solid objects, such as food. It also has an incomplete effect with respect to making potable water—it will clear taint and poisons, but the water could be muddy, filled with rotting debris, and other unpleasantness.

Material Components: A pinch of glass powder.

Hunger's Pledge

Necromancy [Death]

Level: Swt 5

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 1 day/level

Saving Throw: Fort negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Description

This cruel spell is used by either the most despicable or desperate. The creator of *hunger's pledge* was the sea witch Merelda, who saved herself and the crew of her ship *Surf's Deray* by draining the life of the cabin boy and cook with this incantation. Since Merelda met her fate at the hands of the summoner Greemwold, challenging his control of a gargantuan water elemental, more and more sea witches have been known to use the "pledge" — some for survival, some to punish an underling or enemy.

Spell Effect

The sea witch must lay a bloodied hand upon another hu-

manoid. Should this person fail his saving throw, his life force become nourishment for those around him. He immediately suffers 1 point of Constitution damage. Thereafter, he loses 1 further Constitution point a day, as his life ebbs away. The caster can choose a number of humanoids within close range (25 feet + 5 ft./2 levels of caster) who can feed off the victim's emanations.

All who do such will feel neither hunger nor suffer the ill effects of missing food or drink that day. A victim can provide sustenance for twice his level of experience in days and his body visibly shrivels, losing 10 lbs. for every lost point of Constitution. The spell ends when the duration is up, when the victim dies (by reaching 0 Constitution or hit points), or should a *dispel magic* or *remove curse* spell be cast on the victim. The sea witch may also prematurely end the spell. People who knowingly devour the life force of another to stave off hunger and their own death are often corrupted

by this and may have their alignment shifted toward evil if they do not seek *atonement*.

Water Mastery

Transmutation

Level: Drd 6, Sor/Wiz 7, Water 6

Components: V, S, F/DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: See text

Area: See text

Duration: See text

Saving Throw: Will negates (object, harmless, see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes (object, harmless, see text)

Description

This versatile spell allows the caster to shape and manipulate bodies of water. It is commonly used by the aquatic races, as well as sea witches and others who rely on the ocean. Even inland, druids commonly use this spell on lakes and rivers.

Spell Effect

This spell can be used in several ways. Saving throw and spell resistance applies regardless of what spell is emulated. The specific version is determined when cast.



Control Water: This spell can be used in the same way as the *control water* spell.

Control Weather: As the spell, but only affecting bodies of water. That is, storm surge, silt storms and currents can be altered, but not the weather above the sea.

Great Current: Similar to *gust of wind* but only applies underwater. It causes a hurricane-force current to emanate.

Wall of Water: Similar to *wind wall* but composed of water and lasting 1 minute/level (D). Water must be on hand, and the wall must touch a larger body of water.

Water Shape: Similar to *fabricate*, but with twice the volume affected and duration of 1 hour/level. Objects created have hardness 5, composed of rubbery

“solidified water.” This water can be dispelled, and halves visibility per 6 inches of thickness.

Arcane Focus: A small jade sphere intricately carved with thousands of depictions of sea creatures, worth at least 1,000 gp.

Voice of the Deep

Transmutation [Language-Dependent]

Level: Brd 2, Drd 2, Sor/Wiz 2, Swt 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Target: One creature

Duration: 10 minutes/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Description

The merfolk of the City of Pearls taught the surface-dwellers this spell well before the Titanswar, to ensure peace between humans traveling the waters and the races below. The spell has often been used for

good intentions but some with dark hearts have cast *voice of the deep* to converse and conspire with fouler underwater denizens, such as the court of Queen Ran and the pisceans.

Spell Effect

This spell allows the caster to remain on land or aboard ship and converse with any single sentient creature underwater. He must know either the common or secret name of the entity he is seeking to converse with. Powerful casters can reach quite deeply into the sea. Should the target be willing, the two may begin a dialogue for as long as the spell duration lasts. All replies seem to come from the water itself, so the caster can never be entirely sure of the other's exact whereabouts. Note that this spell in no way imparts the ability to speak the creature's language.

The powers of true ritual have long been used to manipulate the world in grand ways. Below is a selection of some of those favored by powerful ritualists in oceanside communities. Rules for true rituals and other ritual magics are found in **Relics & Rituals** and **Relics & Rituals II: Lost Lore**.

Calm Sky and Surf

Level: True Ritual – Clr 5, Drd 5
Components: V, S, M, DF, XP
Casters Required: Special
Proxy: No
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)
Duration: 1 month
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

Description

In the time before the Divine War, Madriel was often petitioned by the inhabitants of small coastal villages to protect their homes and lives from the capricious and cruel whims of Lethene, whose storm winds would bring crashing waves down upon them. The goddess responded by teaching her devoted priests this true ritual which will deter both natural and supernatural bad weather. It is said that Alia Vensir, high priestess of Madriel in Mithril, has been working on an even more powerful version of this ritual to protect that city and the Northern Protectorate from another blood monsoon.

Spell Effect

This ritual must be cast at low tide where the waters meet the land. At least three casters are required to perform the ritual. They can select a nearby village, town or even city to protect or simply ward the surrounding wilderness. The ritual affects a 10-mile radius; doubling the number of casters doubles the area (6 casters protect 20 miles, 12 casters 40 miles, and so forth).

Once the casting is complete, the protected region is considered to have a Spell Resistance of 30 versus any weather- (such as *control weather*, *storm of vengeance* and even *gust of wind*) and water-related magic (*ice storm*, *ship snare*). Any attempt to cast such spells within the warded area must overcome the SR. The weather in the area, if unaffected by magic, stays calm and serene for the duration.

Material Component: 5,000 gp worth of powdered pearls mixed with sand or soil, to be spread about the casters during the ritual.

XP Cost: 1,000 XP per caster.

Figurehead Charm

Level: True Ritual – Clr 2, Wiz 2
Components: V, S, M, F, XP
Casters Required: 3
Proxy: Yes, 10 followers per caster
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

Description

This true ritual was originally developed by the clergy of Manawe as a reward only to the most faithful of sailors. Over time, ships bearing a *figurehead charm* fell into the hands of arcane spellcasters, who discerned the incantations that make up the ritual. Since then, it is rare for the vessels of the wealthiest merchant houses not to be so enchanted; indeed, House Asuras regularly donates large sums to the Society of the Waves for such magic.

Spell Effect

This ritual can only be cast on medium and large sailing ships and enchants the elaborately decorated and carved wooden figurehead mounted on the front of the vessel. A variety of *figurehead charms* exist, but a boat cannot possess more than one. Anyone

having Profession (sailor) of 10 or more ranks can not only discern the presence of a *figurehead charm* after a brief examination but also the specific enchantment added. Each different type of charm is a completely separate true ritual.

- *Beastward charm* – Any unintelligent aquatic creature with an Intelligence of 3 or less must make a DC 13 Will save to take any hostile action against the ship or its crew. Figureheads with this enchantment often resemble ferocious sea monsters.

- *Bountycatch charm* – The oldest charm offers anyone aboard ship a +4 competence bonus on all Profession (fisherman) checks. The traditional figurehead is a pelican, known to be a symbol of good fortune for fishermen. Some old boats now being used by pirates still bear this charm.

- *Flamechase charm* – The ship, including its sails, benefits from fire resistance 10, which prevents the vessel from burning under most circumstances. Carved large fish, whales or waves are the figureheads used with this charm.

- *Stoutdeck charm* – The wood construction of the vessel resists both rot and warping from both mundane and magical sources. The ship has an overall hardness of 8 and hit points of 10/inch of thickness. Many of the figureheads with this charm are of muscled warriors or mermen.

- *Suresail charm* – Anyone at the helm gains a +4 competence bonus to Profession (sailor) checks when navigating dangerous waters. Most figureheads with this enchantment are carved as beautiful women.

Material Component: 2,500 gp must be spent on the crafting of the ship's figurehead.

XP Cost: 1,000 XP per caster.

The Blood Sea

Trade
Routes

Heart of
Blood
Archaeology

Trade
Routes

Prestige Classes

Success and prosperity on (or in) the Blood Sea is a matter of survival — those who learn to endure its dangers are the ones who reap its rewards. What follows is a selection of those who have learned to do just that.

Beastmaker

It is said the first beastmaker to unlock the secrets of the blood of Kadum heard it directly from the Father of Monsters himself. He claims the Mountainshaker charged him with the task of continuing his work — that of creating more titanspawn. Using the blood from the seas where Kadum lay imprisoned, the druid started the work of unlocking the secrets of the blood.

Beastmakers can be recognized by their eyes — dark pupils in the center of swirling pools of blood. They slip through society when need be with carefully drawn hoods, so as not to be recognized in hostile territory. To be a beastmaker is to be drawn into the lure of the titan's power. Indeed, many have gone mad or died for the power the blood contains.

Only the most skilled can use the blood, though, and woe be unto those who foolishly try to master it.

Hit Die: d8

Requirements

To qualify to become a beastmaker, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Fortitude Save: +6

Faith: Kadum

Feats: Toughness

Skills: Craft (alchemy) 10 ranks.

Spellcasting: Ability to cast 5th-level druid spells

Special: Someone wishing to become a beastmaker must drink a special potion made from the blood of the titan Kadum. Should the initiate survive, he is then inducted into the mysteries of this group and taught how to continue the Father of Monsters' work.



Class Skills

The beastmaker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Heal (Wis), Ritual Casting (Con, exclusive skill), Spellcraft (Int), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the beastmaker prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Beastmakers are proficient with simple weapons, light and medium armor, and shields.

Spells per Day: Beastmakers continue to advance in spellcasting ability. When a new beastmaker level is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in the druid class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (increased *wildshape* uses, etc.). This essentially means that he adds the level of beastmaker to the level of his druid class, then determines spell per day and caster level accordingly.

Immunity (Ex): At 1st level, the beastmaker is immune to all poisons, including the harmful effects of Kadum's blood.

Blood Frenzy (Ex): At 2nd level, the beastmaker at the beginning of his action can heat his blood to the boiling point, enraging himself into a murderous frenzy and gaining monstrous strength and durability, but he loses all sense of self-preservation, caring only to rip his enemies asunder.

In a blood frenzy, a beastmaker temporarily gains a +4 bonus to Strength, a +4 bonus to Constitution and a +2 morale bonus on Will saves, but he takes a -2 penalty to Armor Class. The increase in Constitution increases the beastmaker's hit points by 2 points per level, but these hit points go away at the end of the rage when his Constitution score drops back to normal. (These extra hit points are not lost first the way temporary hit points are.) While raging, a beastmaker cannot use any Charisma-, Dexterity- or Intelligence-based skills (except for Balance, Escape Artist, Intimidate and Ride), the Concentration skill, or any abilities that require patience or concentration, nor can he cast spells or activate magic items that require a command word, a spell trigger (such as a wand) or spell completion (such as a scroll) to function. He can use any feat he has except Combat Expertise, item creation feats and

metamagic feats. A fit of rage lasts for a number of rounds equal to 3 + the character's (newly improved) Constitution modifier. A beastmaker may prematurely end his rage. At the end of the rage, he loses the rage modifiers and restrictions and becomes fatigued (-2 penalty to Strength, -2 penalty to Dexterity, can't charge or run) for the duration of the current encounter.

A beastmaker can fly into a rage only once per encounter. At 2nd level he can use his rage ability once per day. Every four levels thereafter, he can use it one additional time per day. Entering a rage takes no time itself, but a beastmaker can do it only during his action, not in response to someone else's action.

Imbue Creature: At 3rd level, the beastmaker gains special qualities and attacks that he is able to alter creatures with. These must be taken from other creatures (not outsiders or elementals) that the beastmaker has killed and studied himself. This cannot come from a creature with a higher CR than the beastmaker's levels in this prestige class when he takes the feature; that is, a 5th-level beastmaker can learn a feature from a creature with CR 5 or less.

To apply these features to a creature involves an expenditure of XP and gold. A Special Quality involves an XP value of 10 x the CR of the creature, and a gp value of 100 gp x the CR of the creature. A Special Attack doubles the above (20 XP and 200 gp per CR, respectively).

These are then combined in any fashion the beastmaker cares in a huge alchemical process that takes a single day to create, but the creature must "cure" for one additional day per 100 gp value of the changes.

Table A-1: Sample Beastmade Features and Costs

GP Cost	XP Cost	Feature
5	50	Fangs (1d4+Str damage)
5	50	Water Breathing (Ex)
10	100	Claws (1d6 +Str damage)
20	200	Flight (Ex) (fly at twice the base creature's base land speed; poor maneuverability)
20	200	Blindsight (Ex)
20/+1 AC	200/+1 AC	Natural Armor

Table A-2: The Beastmaker (Bmk)

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Immunity	+1 level of druid class
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Blood frenzy 1/day	+1 level of druid class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Imbue creature	+1 level of druid class
4th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Twisted summoning	+1 level of druid class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+1	—	+1 level of druid class
6th	+4	+5	+2	+2	Blood frenzy 2/day	+1 level of druid class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+2	—	+1 level of druid class
8th	+6	+6	+2	+2	—	+1 level of druid class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+3	—	+1 level of druid class
10th	+7	+7	+3	+3	Child of Kadum, blood frenzy 3/day	+1 level of druid class

Twisted Summoning (Ex): At 4th level, the beastmaker gains the ability to spontaneously transform the animals summoned through the use of the *summon nature's ally* spells. An animal may be summoned that gains the benefit of two Special Attack or Special Quality features per effective spell level increase.

That is, summoning a Medium shark normally requires a *summon nature's ally II* spell. A beastmaker who wishes to grant that shark an extra Special Attack and Special Quality (or

two Attacks, or two Qualities, etc.) may summon it using a *summon nature's ally III* spell.

Child of Kadum: At 10th level, Kadum's blood has altered the beastmaker so much he is no longer a humanoid. He is forever considered an aberration, gaining darkvision 60 ft. as well as a set of barbed claws that inflict damage that is dependent on the size of the character (see MM, Table 5-1). Spells that affect humanoids no longer affect him (for example, *charm person*).

Illtrawler

Lurking where the waters of the Blood Sea lap the coastlines and shores are the illtrawlers, miscreants who turn their backs on the trappings of civilization to throw out their nets and lines and haul in clots of Kadum's blood.

Most illtrawlers come from poor backgrounds, raised in simple fisherfolk homesteads. They learned to view the sea as a source of life and death. Occasionally, druids that once paid homage to Kadum, after years of reverence, develop a selfish yearning for power that leads them to cannibalize the gore cast off from Kadum's body for their own ends. Some of the misanthropic folk along the Celestial Shelf or the tribesmen dwelling on the islands of the Blood Sea, once adepts or rangers, learn the bitter way of the illtrawler.

As they master their craft, hauling in more and more of the titan's gore, an illtrawler becomes more tainted, even animalistic. While some of these villains seek dominion over their territory, oppressing any they do not choose to feed on (even hags are loath to challenge a powerful illtrawler for his crimson spoils), many of them develop an almost single-minded existence: every waking hour spent fishing for bloody gobbets, or devouring their catch raw and eventually falling into fitful sleeps dreaming of the titan. Woe to any intruder who comes along to disrupt an illtrawler's life.

Hit Die: d8



Requirements

To qualify to become an illtrawler, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment:

Chaotic evil or neutral evil

Base Save Bonus: Fortitude +4

Skills: Knowledge (nature) 4 ranks, Profession (fisherman) 4 ranks, Swim 6 ranks, Use Rope 6 ranks

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net)

Special: Must be able to cast 2nd-level spells as a ranger, druid or adept.

Special: The character must perform a ceremony, first drowning a worshipper of the gods in the Blood Sea and then devouring live catch infected with the taint of Kadum's blood.

Class Skills

The illtrawler's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier

Class Features

All the following are class features of the illtrawler prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Illtrawlers are proficient with club, dagger, harpoon, halfspear, net, small spear and trident. They have no proficiency with armor or shield.

Spells per Day: Illtrawlers continue to advance in spellcasting ability. For every other illtrawler level gained, the character gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in a spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). This essentially means that he adds half the level of illtrawler (rounding down) to the level of some other spellcasting class he has, then determines spell per day and caster level accordingly.

If a character had more than one spellcasting class before he became an illtrawler, he must decide to which class he adds half the level of illtrawler (rounding down) for purposes of determining spells per day when he adds the new level.

Consume (Su): Illtrawlers usually consume the gobs of Kadum's gore — often called the

Trawling

Anyone can attempt to trawl or net the coagulated lumps of Kadum's gore from the waters of the Blood Sea. To succeed, he must make a successful DC 25 Profession (fisherman) check. Illtrawlers happen to be more skilled in this and may add their levels of experience to the die roll. If successful, the character brings in one clot that he may choose to store or devour. No more than one trawling attempt can be made per day.

Cruor does not last long after being taken from the water. With a DC 15 Craft (alchemy) and the expense of 50 gp worth of essential materials and preparations, the blood clot will remain potent for up to two weeks.

cruor — they catch, internally transmuting them according to their own transformed nature, rather than use them in alchemical experiments. The more powerful the illtrawler, the more of the innate might contained in the titan's remains are digested.

After ingesting the cruor, the illtrawler gains a +1 primal bonus to Strength every other level. At 5th level, after eating, he also gains damage reduction 5/magic and a primal bonus equal to the bonus he gains on his Strength to any Fort saves. The effects of consuming cruor last for 1d3 hours.

Should the illtrawler devour a second cruor before the first's effects are over, he must make a DC 20 Will save. Failure means he flies into a blood-seeking rage (treat as barbarian rage but with no ability increases or additional hit points). Should the save be successful, he channels the anger to raise his damage reduction to 10/magic and can now ignore the effects of sustaining massive damage (see *Player's Handbook*) but receives no further increase in Strength.

Unnatural Health (Ex): By 2nd level, the illtrawler's diet caught from the Blood Sea has made him immune to the effects of disease and poisons. Magical afflictions other than those caused by the Blood Sea itself (such as lycanthropy) are still a risk to the character.

Net Mastery (Ex): At 3rd level, an illtrawler has developed a masterful control over the nets he uses. He gains a +1 competence bonus to attack rolls using a net in combat. This bonus increases to +2 at 6th level and +3 at 9th level. An illtrawler can also extend any touch spell through the net to affect anyone caught inside.

Table A—3: The Illtrawler (If)

Class Level	Base				Special	Spells per Day
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save		
1st	+0	+2	+0	+1	Consume 1, trawling bonus	—
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+1	Unnatural health	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+1	+3	+1	+2	Net mastery 1	—
4th	+2	+4	+1	+2	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
5th	+2	+4	+1	+3	Consume 2, healing wade 1	—
6th	+3	+5	+2	+3	Bestial visage, net mastery 2	+1 level of existing class
7th	+3	+5	+2	+4	Bad blood, consume (+4)	—
8th	+4	+6	+2	+4	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
9th	+4	+6	+3	+5	Net mastery 3	—
10th	+5	+7	+3	+5	Healing wade 2	+1 level of existing class

Bonus Feat: Through constant exposure to the cruor, the illtrawler slowly becomes hardier as he also becomes more malevolent. He can channel this newfound strength and self-awareness into one of the following bonus feats: Brew Potion, Endurance, Enlarge Spell, Great Fortitude, Spell Penetration, Toughness, Weapon Focus (net). He gains a bonus feat every four levels (4th, 8th, etc.).

Healing Wade (Su): By 5th level, the illtrawler's body has grown so acclimated to the waters of the Blood Sea that he actually gains fast healing 3 if he wades into the surf. He must submerge at least half of his body (either by swimming or simply being waist-deep) in order to benefit from this ability. At 10th level, this ability confers fast healing 5.

Bestial Visage (Ex): At 6th level, the illtrawler can eat only raw meat and fish. His features, hands and feet transform into something more animalistic. Over a period of days, the illtrawler's features and digits come to resemble those of a coastal or sea predator (perhaps an otter or seal, or maybe an albatross or heron, and some with the eyes and teeth of a barracuda have been encountered). He may make a proficient bite or claw attack (depending on the nature of the mutation), inflicting 1d4 damage, and gains a +2 bonus to all Swim checks. He also gains +2 to any Intimidate checks and +2 to Diplomacy rolls with evil aquatic races (such as pisceans or scrag).

Bad Blood (Ex): By 7th level, the illtrawler's own blood has been so corrupted that it can taint others with blood fever (see above) if exposed. He may cut himself and contaminate food or drink with his blood.

Sea Witch

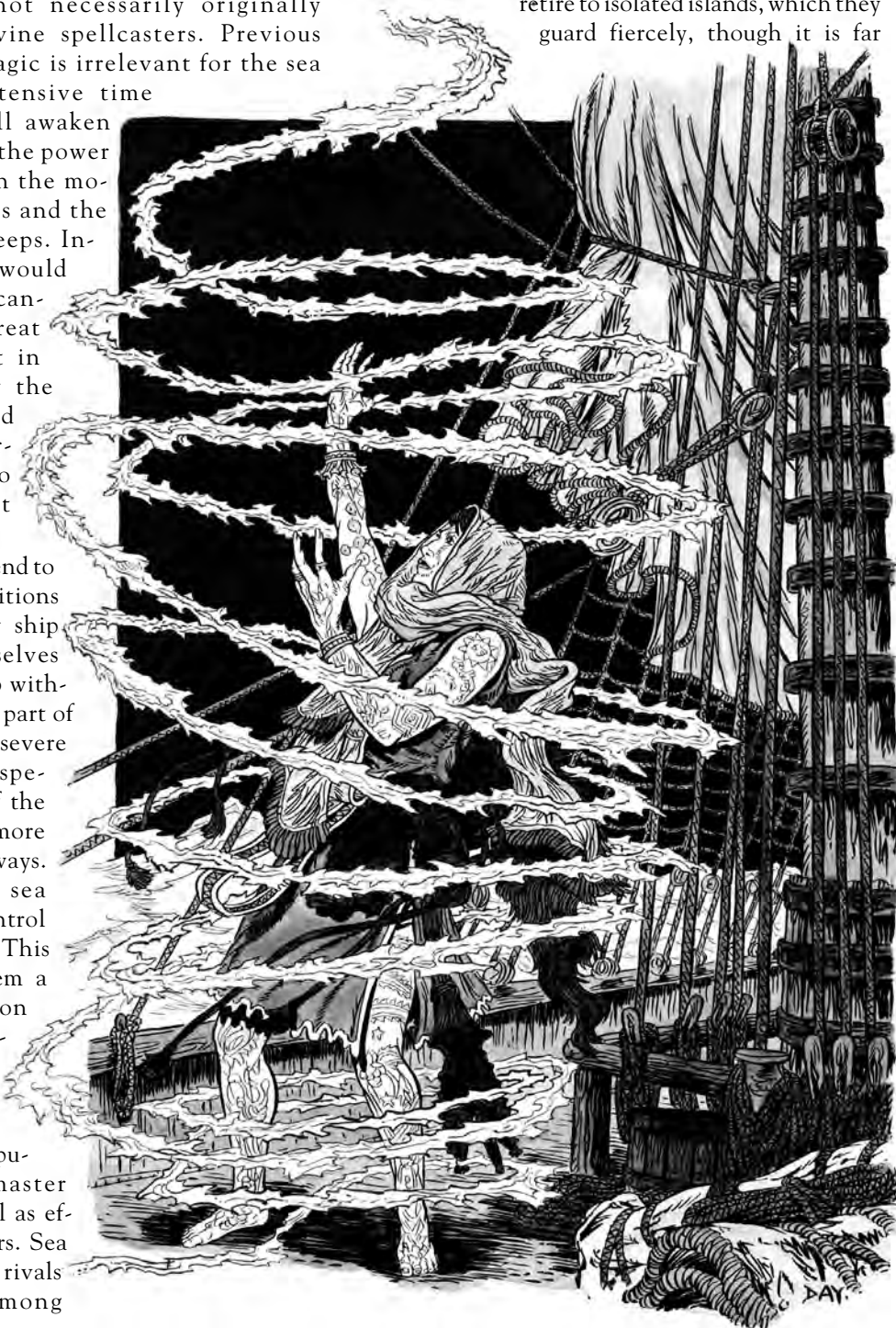
Master of wind and wave, the sea witch is an invaluable crewmember for any ship that travels the blood-soaked seas of the Scarred Lands. These spellcasters have long been known for their dedication to protecting their ship and their crew at any cost. They are trained not only to command the elements of the sea, but also to summon and control its beasts.

Unlike many elite spellcasters, sea witches were not necessarily originally arcanists or divine spellcasters. Previous knowledge of magic is irrelevant for the sea witch; only extensive time spent at sea will awaken the sea witch to the power that sings within the motion of the waves and the silence of the deeps. Indeed, many who would be sea witches cannot wield the great powers inherent in the sea — only the toughest and strongest of mortals can hope to harness that power.

Sea witches tend to rapidly rise to positions of power on any ship they find themselves on. In fact, a ship without a sea witch as part of its crew is at a severe disadvantage, especially on some of the Scarred Lands' more dangerous waterways. Fleets led by sea witches often control key trade routes. This control gives them a near monopoly on certain commodities, such as jade or rare spices. As a result, sea witches have a reputation as master merchants as well as effective spellcasters. Sea witches often find rivals and enemies among

other seafarers, including the pirate princes and the Krewe of Waves.

Despite the name, many sea witches are male. Also, despite the legend to the contrary, only a small number of sea witches become hags. Those that do become hags were almost exclusively evil, female worshipers of Mormo even prior to their training. Sea witches can be of any alignment and religious background, if they can find a mentor willing to train them. Older sea witches might retire to isolated islands, which they guard fiercely, though it is far



more common for them to go down with their ship, or less commonly, to die on their ship and to be buried at sea.

Hit Die: d6

Requirements

To qualify to become a sea witch, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Feat: Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (profession - sailor)

Skill: Profession (sailor) 8 ranks

Special: A sea witch must accept the character as a student. Mentor sea witches typically arrange tests that try all of their pupils' attributes and abilities. Would-be sea witches rarely come away from their testing and their training unchanged, and many have long unkempt hair that seems tormented by the wind even on still days.

Class Skills

The sea witch's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, Swim (Str) and Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the sea witch prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A sea witch is proficient with all simple weapons, light armor and shields.

Bond with Boat/Ship (Su): When casting any spell with a personal range, a sea witch can target the vessel to which she is bound. This ability works for any spells cast by the sea witch, regardless of the class that provides them.

To bond to a ship, the sea witch must perform a ritual that requires one day and 100 XP for every 25 feet (or less) of length of the ship. The sea witch must be in contact with the target ship for the duration of the ritual. The sea witch may eat or drink during the bonding but may not engage in combat, other spellcasting or even animated conversation. The sea witch may be bonded to only one vessel at a time but may change the bond by performing the ritual for another ship.

For the purposes of this ability, a small boat is one less than 25 feet long, a large boat is between 25 and 50 feet long, a small ship is 50 to 100 feet long and a large ship is any ship over 100 feet long.

Spells: A sea witch casts arcane spells, which are drawn from the sea witch spell list. She can cast any spell she knows without preparing it ahead of time. Every sea witch spell has a verbal component. To learn or cast a spell, a sea witch must have a Charisma score equal to at least 10 + the spell. The Difficulty Class for a saving throw against a sea witch's spell is 10 + the spell level + the sea witch's Charisma modifier.

As with other spellcasters, a sea witch can cast only a certain number of spells of each spell level per day. Her base daily spell allotment is given in Table A-6: The Sea Witch. In addition, she receives bonus spells per day if she has a high Charisma score. When Table A-6 indicates that the sea witch has no spells per day of a given spell level, she gains only the bonus spells she would be entitled to based on her Charisma score for that spell level.

The sea witch's selection of spells is extremely limited. A sea witch begins play knowing four 0-level spells of your choice. At most new sea witch levels, she gains one or more new spells, as indicated in Table A-5: Sea Witch Spells Known. (Unlike spells per day, the number of spells a sea witch knows is not affected by her Charisma score; the numbers in Table A-5 are fixed.)

Table A-5: Sea Witch Spells Known

Level	Spells Known					
	0	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
1st	4	1	—	—	—	—
2nd	5	2	—	—	—	—
3rd	6	3	1	—	—	—
4th	6	4	2	—	—	—
5th	6	4	2	1	—	—
6th	6	4	3	2	—	—
7th	6	4	4	2	1	—
8th	6	4	4	3	2	—
9th	6	4	4	4	2	1
10th	6	4	4	4	3	2

Table A—6: The Sea Witch (Swf)

Class Level	Base				Special	Spells per Day (1/2/3/4/5)
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save		
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	Bond with small boat	1
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	Ignore metamagic penalty (1 level)	2
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+3	Aquatic wild shape 1	3/1
4th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Bond with large boat	4/2
5th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Ignore metamagic penalty (2 levels)	4/2/1
6th	+4	+2	+5	+5	Aquatic wild shape 2	4/3/2
7th	+5	+2	+5	+5	Bond with small ship	4/4/2/1
8th	+6	+2	+6	+6	Ignore metamagic penalty (3 levels)	4/4/3/2
9th	+6	+3	+6	+6	Aquatic wild shape 3	4/4/4/2/1
10th	+7	+3	+7	+7	Bond with large ship	4/4/4/3/2

Ignore Metamagic Penalty (Ex): At 2nd level, sea witches may reduce the cost of metamagic feats by one level, as long as they are casting on the deck of a ship to which they are bonded. The reduction applies once per day, and the level of the spell cast may never be reduced to below the original level of the spell.

For example, Serena is a 3rd-level sea witch. She wishes to cast *create water* using the Empower Spell feat. Normally, this would require a 3rd-level spell slot, but for Serena, it is the equivalent of a 1st-level spell (0-level spell + 2 levels for Empower Spell – 1 level for sea witch ability). As another example, Alexia, Serena’s 8th-level sea witch mentor, wants to cast *expeditious retreat* on her vessel using the Extend Spell and Silent Spell feats. For most spellcasters, this would be the equivalent of a 3rd-level spell (1st-level spell + 1 level for Extend Spell + 1 level for Silent Spell), but Alexia casts the combination as a 1st-level spell. Alexia can ignore three levels of metamagic penalty and thus ignores one level on Extend Spell and one on Silent Spell; the third level is wasted, as no more levels of metamagic penalties are involved in the casting.

At 5th level, sea witches may reduce the cost of metamagic feats by two. At 8th level, sea witches may reduce the cost of metamagic feats by three. These levels may be split among different castings, or all on one spell.

Aquatic Wild Shape (Su): At 3rd level, the sea witch gains the ability of *wild shape*, as druids do, but is limited to Medium aquatic animals. At 6th level, the sea witch may shift into the forms of Small and Large aquatic animals and may change twice per day. At 9th level, the sea witch may shift into the forms of Tiny and Huge aquatic animals and may transform three times per day.

Sea Witch Spell List

Spells marked with an asterisk can be found in **Relics & Rituals**; those marked with a double asterisk can be found in **Relics & Rituals II: Lost Lore**.

0 level—*clean**, *chill/warmth**, *cure minor wounds*, *dancing lights*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *dowsing**, *false flavor***, *filch***, *flare*, *mending*, *quick sober**, *read magic*.

1st level—*alarm*, *animal messenger*, *buoyancy net**, *call aquatic animal I**, *charm person or animal*, *champion swimmer***, *comprehend languages*, *create water*, *expeditious retreat*, *obscuring mist*, *silent image*, *sleep*, *speak with animals*, *spider climb*, *swift water**, *unseen servant*.

2nd level—*animal trance*, *animate rope*, *augury*, *blur*, *call aquatic humanoid I**, *charm monster*, *cold snap**, *daylight*, *detect thoughts*, *downdraft***, *fog cloud*, *identify*, *invisibility*, *lure***, *wind walk*.

3rd level—*battle projection***, *call aquatic animal II**, *call lightning*, *clairaudience*, *clairvoyance*, *create food and water*, *dispel magic*, *dominate animal*, *gaseous form*, *gust of wind*, *pressure sphere**, *shrink item*, *stinking cloud*, *touch of the eel**, *water breathing*, *water walk*.

4th level—*air walk*, *blood water***, *call aquatic monster**, *control water*, *control winds*, *detect scrying*, *diminish plants*, *freedom of movement*, *hold monster*, *improved invisibility*, *live wood**, *repel vermin*, *ship snare**, *solid fog*, *water’s embrace**.

5th level—*animal growth*, *awaken*, *call aquatic humanoid II**, *call celestial/fiendish aquatic monster**, *cloudkill*, *control weather*, *dark water*, *Dolomar’s limited liquification**, *fabricate*, *find the path*, *greater familiar (water elemental, avian or aquatic only)**, *ice storm*, *iron wood**, *mislead*, *sending*, *undead crew***, *veil*.

Seaborn

The first seaborn were merfolk who devoted their lives to the service of Manawe. As men from the surface world began exploring the goddess' watery realm using ships of wood, the merfolk spread the faith of the Mother of Oceans to sailors and explorers. Seaborn still remain rare to most of the Scarred Lands, as they concern themselves with the world's seas rather than the masses of land. They involve themselves in politics only when it affects the

waters: naval wars and blockades, magical and unnatural accidents and incidents (such as the Blood Monsoon), and the thwarting of piracy.

A seaborn is blessed by Manawe with abilities that allow him to act both above and below the waves. Like the goddess, these individuals understand that many sea beasts serve roles in the proper cycles of the seas. It is aberrations created by foul magic and titan-'s blood that angers them and have no deserving place in the

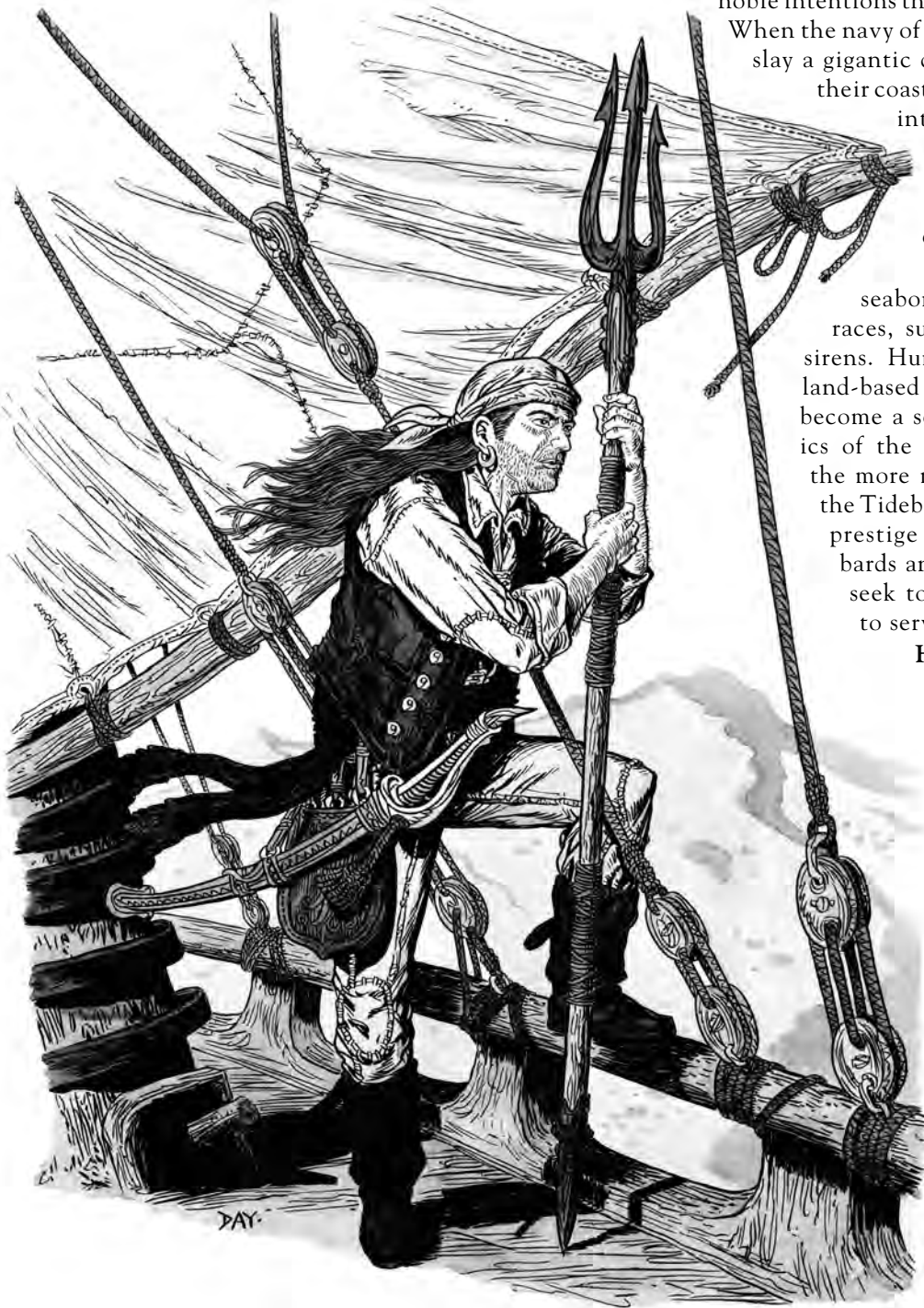
oceans. A seaborn will act even against noble intentions that endanger the sea.

When the navy of Darakene sought to slay a gigantic dire shark prowling their coast, one of the seaborn intervened, sinking at least two ships in order to give the great beast time to escape.

The majority of seaborn hail from aquatic races, such as merfolk and sirens. Humans are the only land-based race ever known to become a seaborn. Many clerics of the goddess, especially the more martial members of the Tidebrethren, choose this prestige class, but devout bards and rangers also may seek to become a seaborn to serve Manawe better.

Hit Die:

d8



Requirements

To qualify to become a seaborn, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Chaotic neutral

Skills: Survival 6 ranks, Swim 10 ranks

Faith: Manawe

Feats: Sea's Kindness (see above)

Class Skills

A seaborn's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Cha), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str) and Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier

Class Features

All the following are class features of the seaborn prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency:

Seaborns are proficient with all simple weapons but no armor or shields.

Powerful Swimmer (Ex): The seaborn gains a Swim speed equal to his normal movement. Additionally, the DC to avoid nonlethal damage from fatigue due to long swimming times is reduced to 15.

Auspices of Manawe (Ex): Imbued with the presence of Manawe, a seaborn of 2nd level can turn away evil marine creatures. When dealing with undead that frequent the ocean (blood zombies, ghosts of pirates, marine ghouls and the like), he gains a +3 on his turn undead checks. The character may also apply his turn undead ability to any evil-aligned aquatic monster, including humanoids and outsiders. Note

that the seaborn can only turn and not destroy the later creatures.

This ability is possessed even by those individuals who lack clerical experience and the Turn Undead ability (in such cases, the character turns undead as a cleric of a level equal to his levels in the seaborn prestige class).

Tears of the Sea (Su): At 3rd level, a seaborn can shed potent tears that have a variety of effects. He may choose to cry over the body of a humanoid or animal and heal 2 points of damage/seaborn level.

Additionally, his tears may transform liquids up to 1 cubic foot into seawater (alchemical substances save at a DC 18, holy/unholy water at DC 13, and potions at DC 15 to resist the transformation).

At 7th level, the seaborn can pool his tears in his hand, mixing them with sand and transforming them into pearls (valued at 100 gp), or to grant *water breathing* (as per the spell). He may shed tears for this purpose once per week.

Bestow Curse (Su): At 4th level, the seaborn may bestow upon offenders and the impious a curse. For a number of days equal to 1 + the seaborn's Cha modifier, the cursed individual suffers a -4 penalty on all seaman-ship skills such as Knowledge (navigation), Profession (sailor) and Swim checks as well as a -2 penalty on any other skill checks made aboard ship. A *remove curse* can end the bane. A seaborn cannot curse more than one individual at a time and can remove the curse himself should he so desire.

Transformation (Su): By 5th level, the seaborn is transformed. He may breathe water as easily as air (and vice versa for marine races with this prestige class). His body reflects some subtle traits of aquatic life: His skin shows a

Table A-4: The Seaborn (Sbn)

Class Level	Base				Special	Spells per Day
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save		
1st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Powerful swimmer	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+2	+1	+1	Auspices of Manawe	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+1	Tears of the sea 1	+1 level of existing class
4th	+2	+3	+2	+2	Bestow curse	+1 level of existing class
5th	+3	+3	+3	+2	Transformation, voice of the waters	+1 level of existing class
6th	+4	+4	+3	+3	Companion	+1 level of existing class
7th	+5	+4	+4	+3	Tears of the sea 2	+1 level of existing class
8th	+5	+5	+4	+4	Fast healing	+1 level of existing class
9th	+6	+5	+5	+4	Resistance	+1 level of existing class
10th	+7	+6	+5	+5	Weaponry of the surf	+1 level of existing class

trace of iridescent scales, webbed hands and feet, or graceful barbules in his hair. He gains a +1 enhancement bonus to both Charisma and Constitution that reflects the uncanny beauty and enduring nature of the sea held in his new form.

Voice of the Waters (Sp): At 5th level, a seaborn can *speak with aquatic animals and monsters* at will. He learns the Aquan language if he did not previously know it. With the ability to converse with all underwater denizens comes greater understanding: The seaborn gains a +2 reaction bonus when dealing with all marine life and those who ply the sea for their livelihoods (for example, fishermen and pirates alike).

Companion: At 6th level, Manawe offers the seaborn a Small water elemental as a faithful companion. While within sight of the elemental, the seaborn has an empathic link with his companion and can command it without speaking. Should the companion be slain,

the seaborn can petition the goddess for another.

Fast Healing (Ex): At 8th level, the seaborn doubles his rate of natural healing, including the healing of ability score damage.

Resistance (Ex): The most powerful seaborns benefit from the goddess' protection. The character receives a +2 sacred bonus to his Armor Class as well as resistance 5/cold and fire damage, symbolic of the ocean's ability to withstand raging storms, icy floes and even a raging volcano (this benefit stacks with any other elemental protections the character might possess).

Weaponry of the Surf: At 10th level, once per day as a free action, the seaborn can fashion any thrown or melee weapon with which he is proficient out of sand, shells, coral or even seawater. The weapon formed is considered a +2 *aberration bane weapon*. In the seaborn's hands, the weapon lasts for one hour. If abandoned or given to another, the weapon lasts 10 rounds after the seaborn releases it, unless that would cause the weapon to last longer than its hour.

Charduni War Hulk

1 square = 10 feet

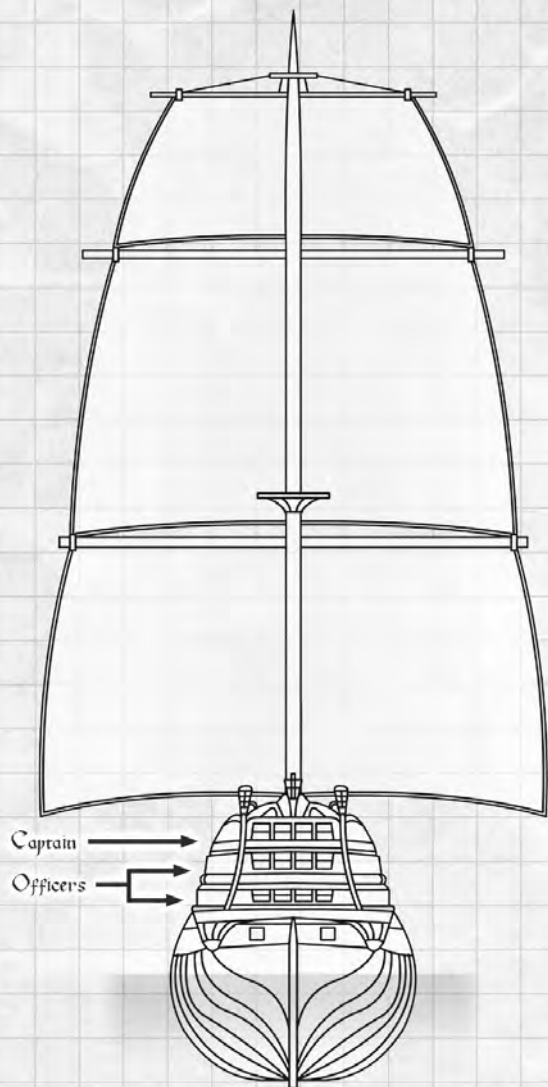
Draft: 4 fathoms

Speed: 13 Knots

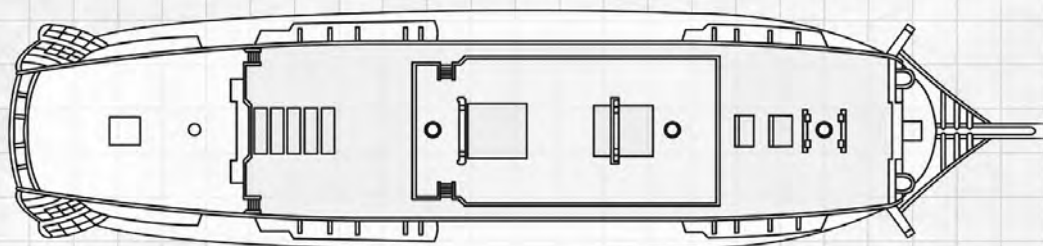
Crew: 250

Passengers: 50

Cargo: 120 tons

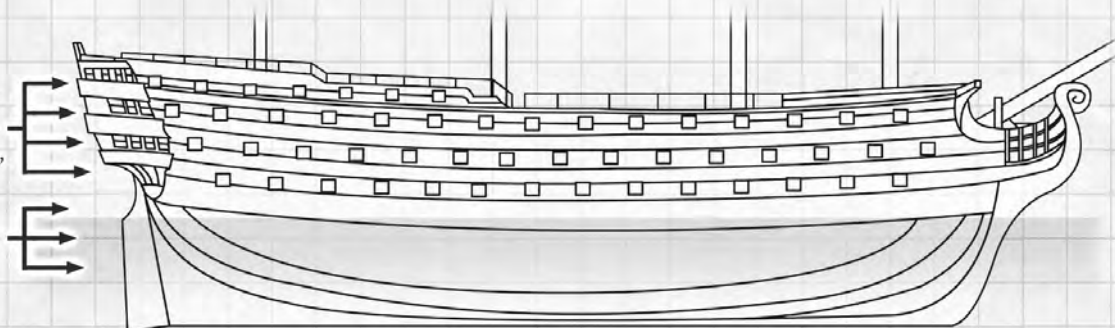


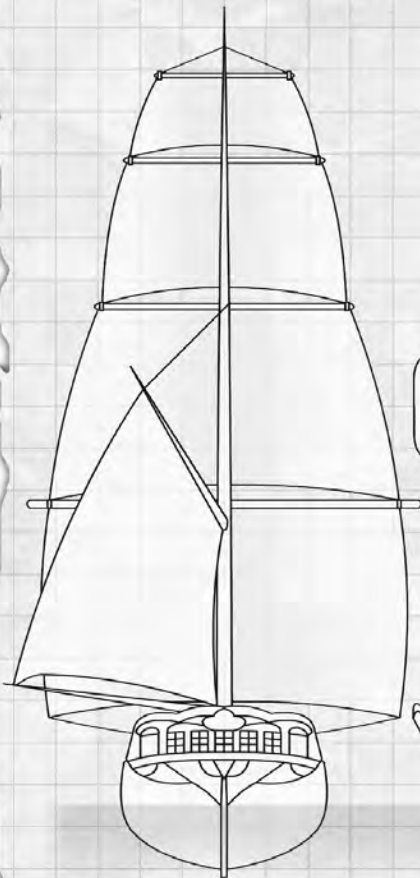
Captain
Officers



Barrel
Decks
& Crew

Cargo
Decks

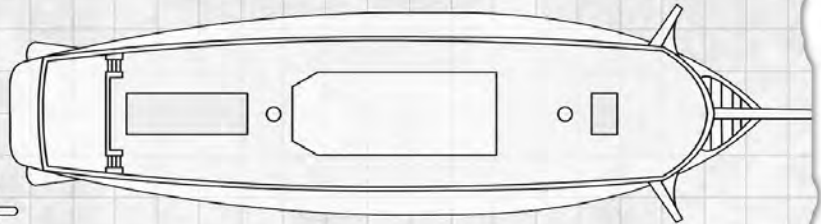




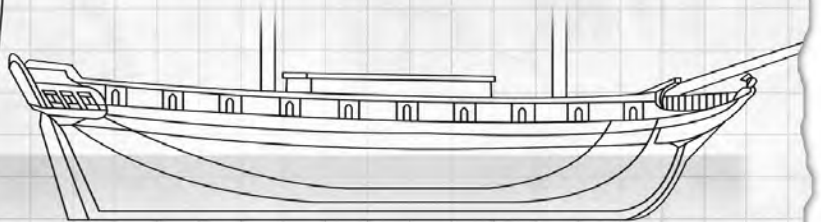
Draft: 2.5 fathoms - Speed: 12 Knots

Crew: 120 - Passengers: 50

Cargo: 100 tons



Coastal Trader

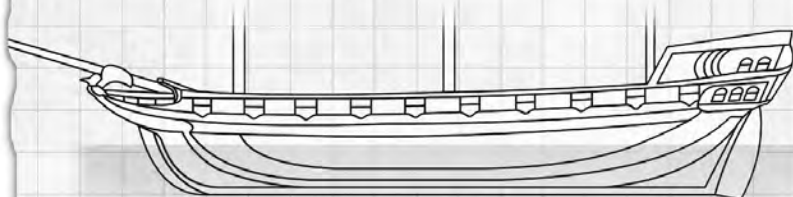
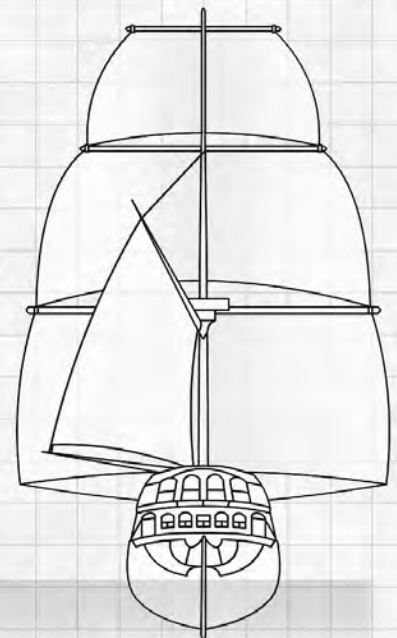
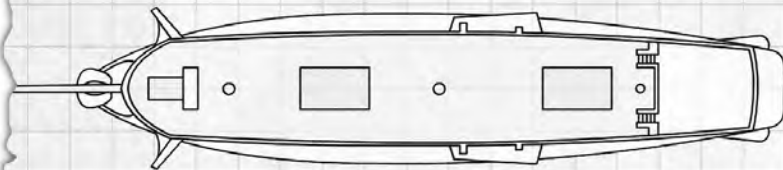


Hedradan Pirate Hunter

Draft: 2 fathoms - Speed: 13 Knots

Crew: 70 - Passengers: 20

Cargo: 80 tons



1 square = 10 feet

Blood Sea Galleon

1 square = 10 feet

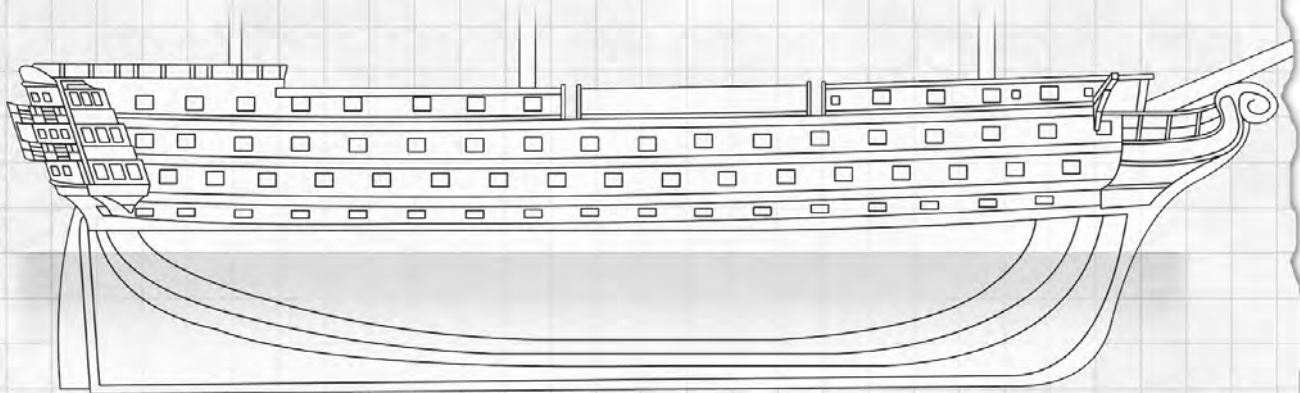
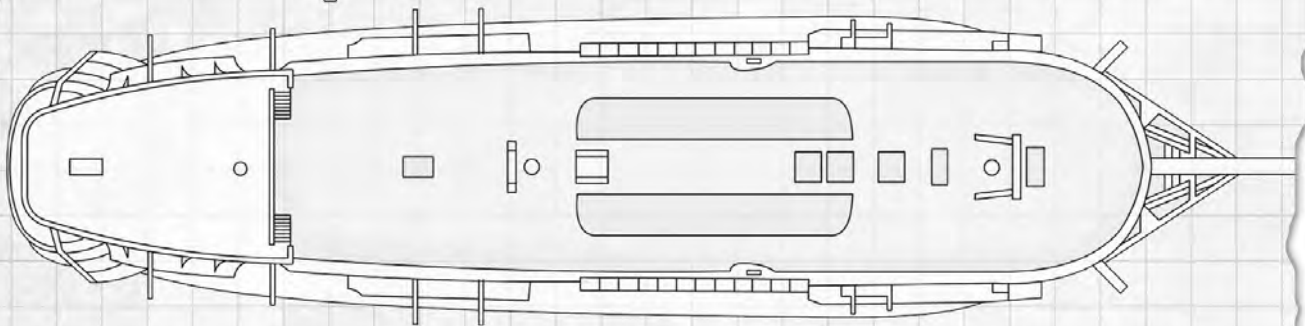
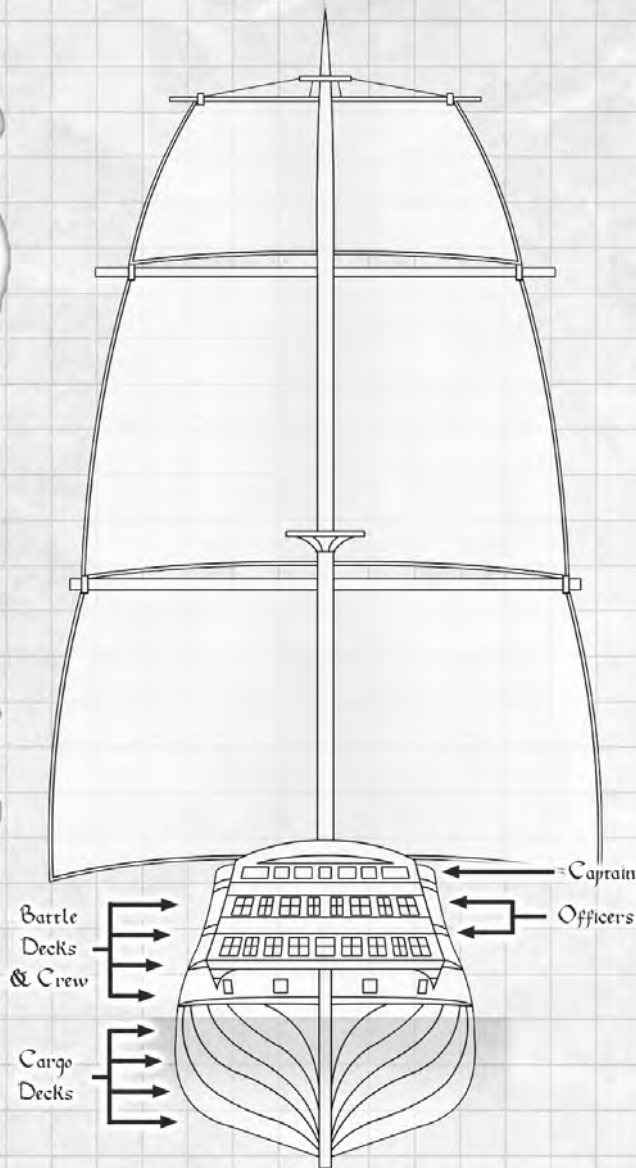
Draft: 5 fathoms

Speed: 12 Knots

Crew: 200

Passengers: 60

Cargo: 400 tons



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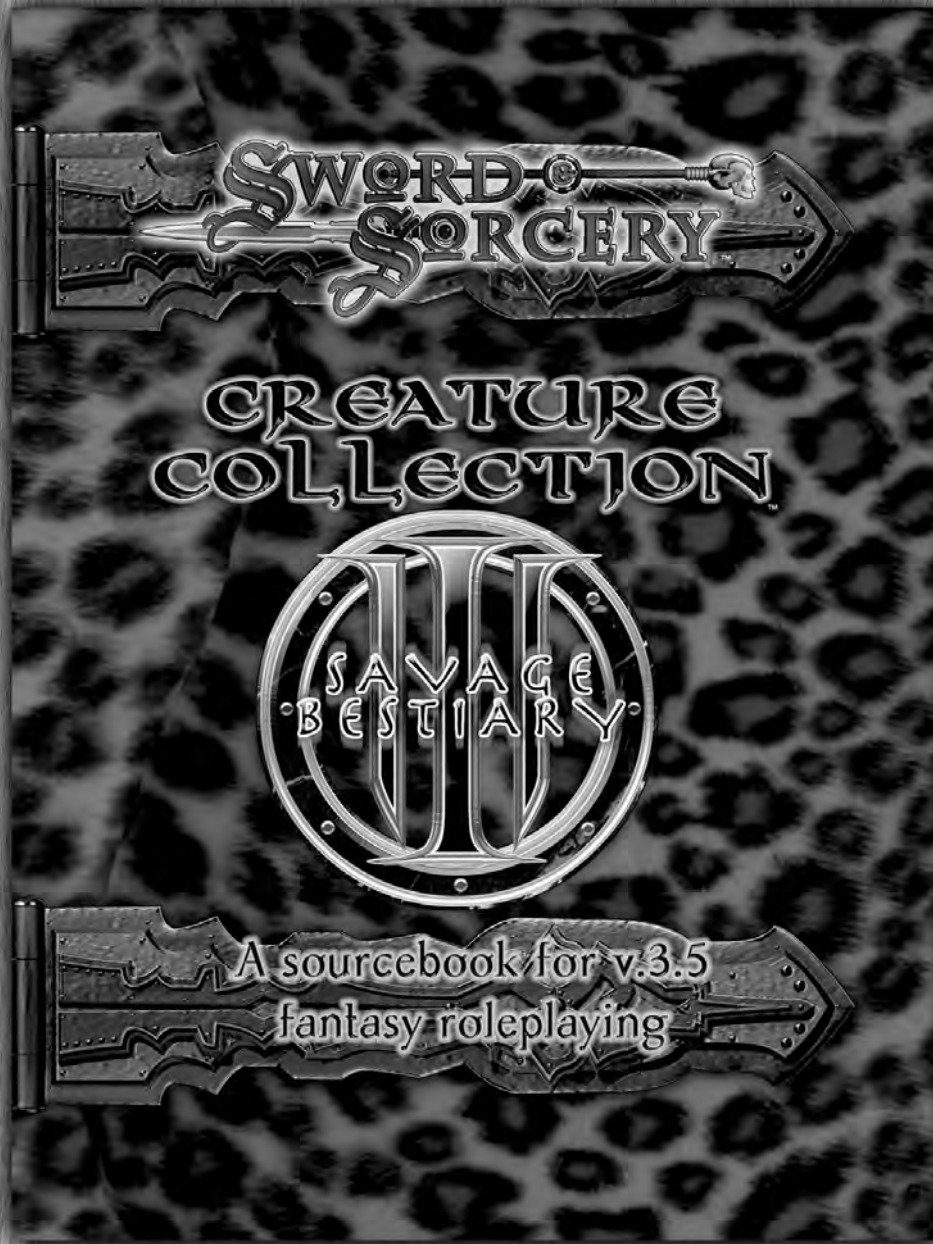
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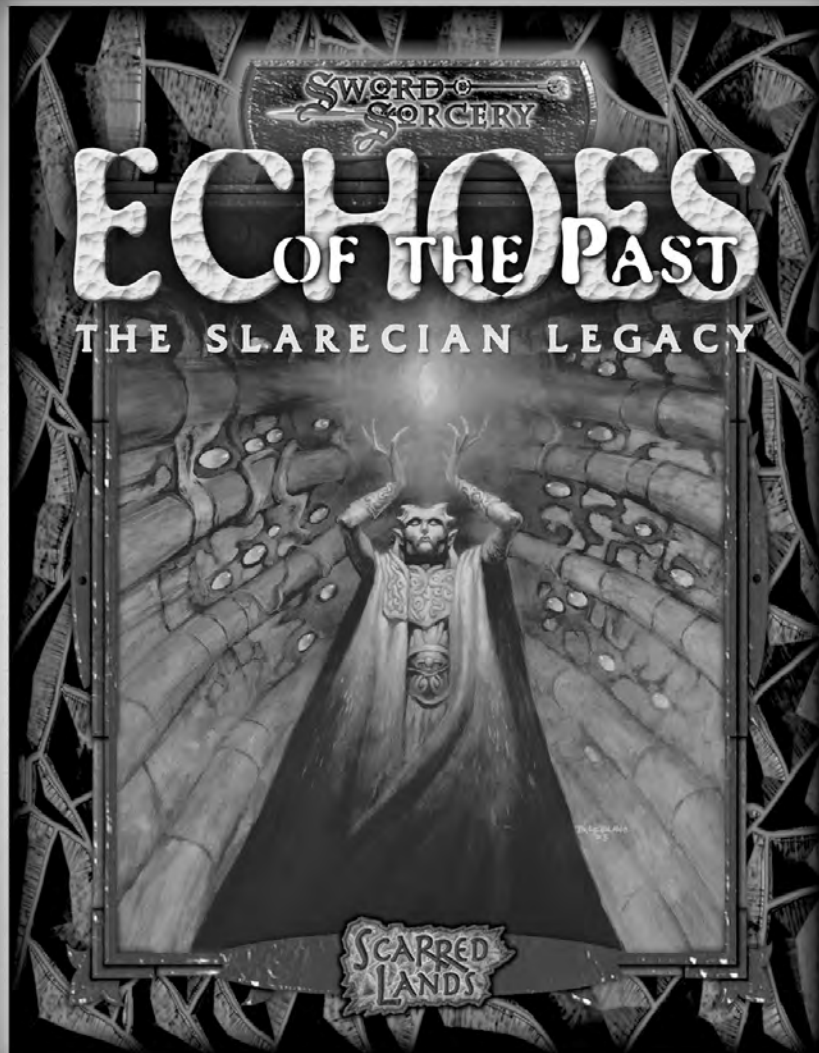
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